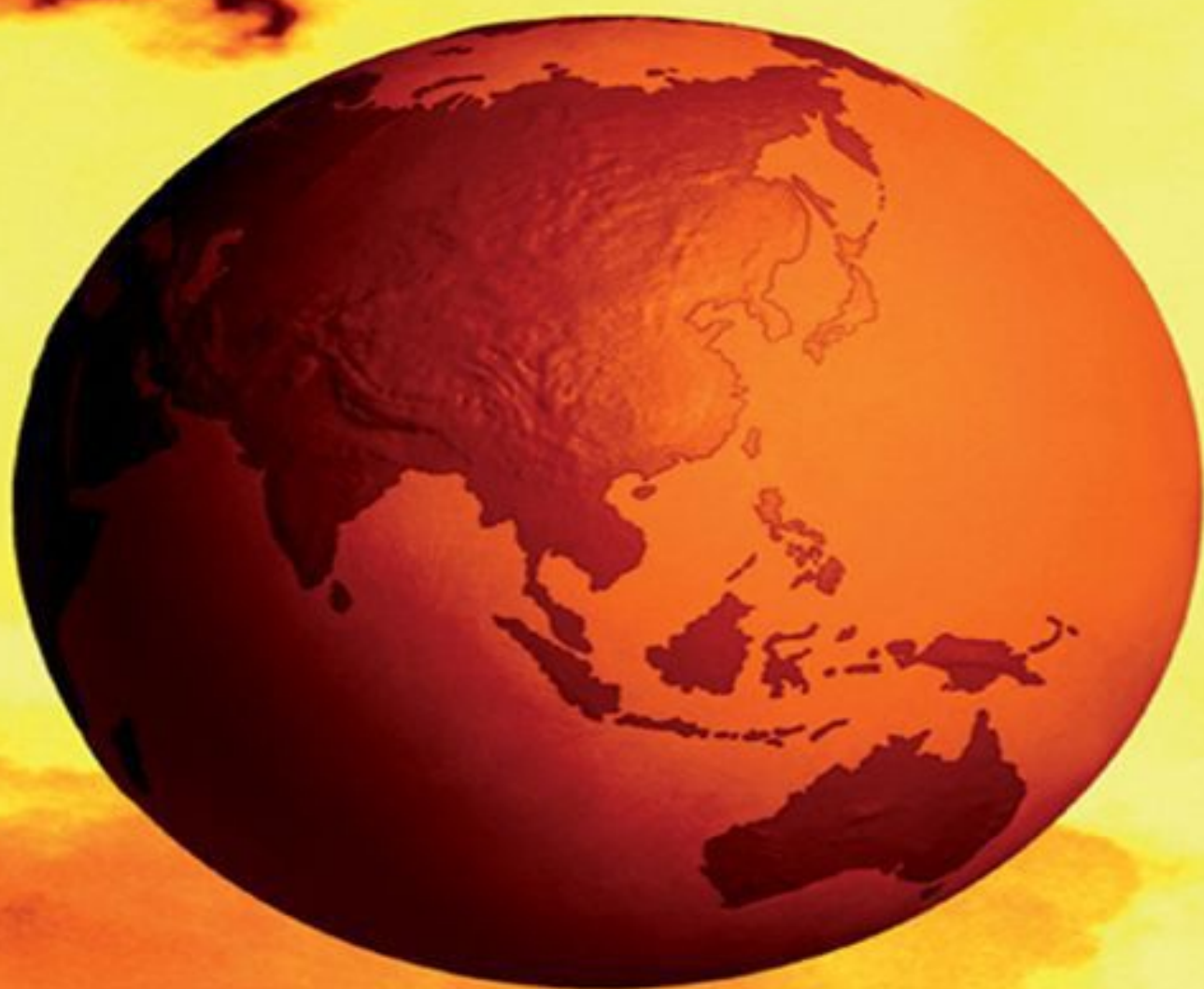


SECURITY POLITICS **IN THE** ASIA-PACIFIC

A Regional–Global Nexus?



Edited by **William T. Tow**

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Security Politics in the Asia-Pacific

Asia is experiencing major changes in its security relations. This book brings together respected experts to assess both the theoretical and empirical dimensions of the Asian security debate. Building on the latest research on Asia's regional security politics, it focuses on the 'regional–global nexus' as a way to understand the dynamics of Asian security politics and its intersection with global security. Contributors to the volume offer diverse but complementary perspectives on which issues and factors are most important in explaining how security politics in Asia can be interpreted at both the regional and global levels of analysis. Issues addressed include power balancing and alliances, governance and democracy, maritime and energy security, the relationship between economics and security, 'human security', terrorism, nuclear non-proliferation, climate change and pandemics. This work will serve as a standard reference on the evolution of key issues in Asian security.

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CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi

Cambridge University Press

The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521758826

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First published in print format 2009

ISBN 978-0-511-63858-9 mobipocket

ISBN 978-0-511-63965-4 eBook (Kindle edition)

ISBN 978-0-521-76535-0 hardback

ISBN 978-0-521-75882-6 paperback

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Preface

As the Cold War recedes further into history, organising security has become manifestly more challenging. Recent international security debates have underscored how even the concept of ‘security’ is vigorously contested. The traditional preoccupations with state-centric survival and positionality are becoming increasingly supplanted by concerns that transcend sovereign borders and that focus on individuals and intra-state factions. The geopolitics of power-balancing and great power primacy is now coexisting with such dynamics as humanitarian politics, democratisation, climate change and pandemic controls to shape a new and broader set of security referents.

This paradigmatic evolution has been assessed extensively, and what role the Asia-Pacific region has played in this process has been an important component of the discussion. In recent years, important and highly respected works have appeared to assess this issue. Analysts have continued to disagree, however, over what is most causally important in determining and understanding the increasingly critical link between what happens in that region and how global security politics is ultimately shaped and implemented. It may be that providing a truly comprehensive definition is beyond the reach of any single study. Yet the effort to capture and explain its significance is decidedly relevant as Asia ascends to economic primacy, as it increasingly counts for more within the world's diplomatic channels and as it becomes a central factor in its military balance. The imperative to explore how power and structure in the international system will be affected by new and often amorphous variables situated outside or beyond the conventional processes of order-building appears ever more pressing.

This volume is the product of that conviction. It was initially conceptualised as a product of a workshop held at the Australian National University (ANU) in August 2006. Many of the most respected experts on Asian security politics attended this event. They were drawn together by a mutual desire to build on an already existing and substantial body of theoretical and empirical work that had been undertaken from this decade's outset that focused on key determinants of Asian regional security and, to a lesser extent, how the policy interests and outcomes generated by those regionally based factors spilled over to influence global security politics as well. The workshop's focus on the ‘global–regional nexus’ was prompted by a growing realisation shared by nearly all policy-makers in and observers of international relations that what happens in Asia now truly resonates at the

global level in both a strategic and politico-economic context – what one of this volume's contributors labels as the Asian 'centre of gravity' driving the most significant trends in international security. This observation by itself does not necessarily unlock the secret of how the regional–global nexus actually operates but it does illuminate the utility of assessing causality as a key dynamic in the shaping of nexus politics as it functions both regionally and globally. Because cause and effect is inherently a highly fluctuating dynamic, reaching sound conclusions or hypotheses about how such a nexus is shaped and what its long-term significance is, can only be a cumulative and painstaking exercise. This volume represents an inaugural effort to initiate this evaluative process.

The ANU's Department of International Relations, a co-sponsor of the workshop from which this volume is derived, is uniquely placed to lead this intellectual quest. Over the past half century, it has been justifiably regarded as producing cutting-edge work that has served as an intersection of theoretical and empirical analysis on the Asia-Pacific's role in international relations. Along with the East-West Center, the other workshop co-sponsor, the ANU is widely recognised as a major source for producing highly valued appraisals of economic, diplomatic and strategic trends in the Asian region. Together, the ANU and the East-West Center constitute two highly appropriate venues for linking regional developments with larger global patterns of security politics. As editor of this volume, it has been a privilege to be associated with this quest.

Acknowledgements

Soon after coming to the Australian National University's Department of International Relations (IR) in early 2005, I was invited by its Head, Professor Chris Reus-Smit, to identify ways to resuscitate its once renowned profile in regional and international security politics. The workshop from which this volume emanates was the product of comprehensive discussions with departmental and other ANU colleagues on how this objective could be met. Any undertaking of this size and complexity involves the effort and goodwill of many people and one could find no finer group of colleagues than those residing in the ANU's Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies (RSPAS) and College of Asia and the Pacific (CAP). To all of them I extend my sincere thanks and gratitude for providing a stimulating and supportive intellectual environment for pursuing academic life.

My departmental colleagues reviewed several 'concept drafts' in preparation for the workshop. I am particularly grateful to Professor Reus-Smit for taking the lead in this process and for graciously providing the funding to make this event a reality. I am also beholden to Paul Keal and Greg Fry, for providing extensive and highly constructive suggestions at the formulative stages of workshop organisation on how to envision and implement 'nexus-related' analysis. Several of my departmental colleagues graciously participated in the workshop either as paper presenters or discussants. Lorraine Elliott, Stuart Harris, Kathy Morton and John Ravenhill fit this category; most other IR colleagues and many of its postgraduate students attended various workshop sessions, making the event a truly departmental enterprise. Credit must also be given to Hugh White, Robert Ayson and Brendan Taylor at the Department of International Relations' 'sister unit' – the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre (SDSC) – for providing additional and highly valued input.

The project would not have seen fruition without the support and guidance of Muthiah Alagappa, then Director of the East-West Center Washington, DC office who graciously co-hosted the workshop at the ANU in August 2006. He was responsible for attracting a number of distinguished participants and encouraging many of them to follow through with either writing chapters for this book or, in some cases, revising their workshop papers as contributions to the *Australian Journal of International Affairs*. In the latter context, I am particularly grateful to J. J. Suh and Tan See Seng for allowing their conference presentations to appear in that journal with pride-of-place.

Plaudits are also due for the workshop dinner's keynote speaker, Michael Costello. As a noted columnist and former political 'insider' during successive Australian Labor governments' years in power, he was able to impart a healthy dose of pragmatism and real-world experience to what was predominantly an academic gathering.

Administrative assistance and overall project support was likewise critical for the workshop's successful culmination. The IR Department's long-time administrator, Ms Amy Chen, once again provided rock-solid oversight and logistical management. She was ably assisted by Ms Lynne Payne on audio-visual aspects and by Mr Gil Oren on the completion of urgent administrative tasks. The ANU's University House proved to be an idyllic setting for our deliberations; Ms Lyn North and her support staff are to be thanked for making it so.

Producing a volume that goes beyond mere conference deliberations is always a challenging endeavour. I am deeply grateful to Cambridge University Press for the understanding and patience it extended during the preparation of this book. John Haslam was particularly supportive during the key phases of manuscript preparation, offering helpful advice and timely feedback on a number of issues. CUP's Carrie Cheek was also a pillar of strength at key phases of the book's production. In Ms Mary-Louise Hickey, the Department of IR has one of the very best copy-editors in the business. Her roles in collating successive drafts, managing editorial procedures and correspondence and helping to construct a viable end-product were absolutely central to whatever contribution the book eventually may make to the subject-at-hand.

Finally, I thank my wife, Leslie, who has endured over three decades of marriage that has involved great levels of tolerance towards my academic life, and my daughter, Shannon, who seems destined to pursue a professional calling in the field of international relations. To them I dedicate this work.

Abbreviations

APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
APP	Asia-Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate
ARF	ASEAN Regional Forum
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASEAN+3	ASEAN plus China, Japan and South Korea
ASEAN+3+1	ASEAN plus China, Japan and South Korea, plus Hong Kong
ASEM	Asia-Europe Meeting
ASG	Abu Sayyaf Group
BMD	ballistic missile defence
BSA	Burden Sharing Agreement
CDM	Clean Development Mechanism
CFC	chlorofluorocarbon
CHS	Commission on Human Security
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species
CO ₂	carbon dioxide
CSCE	Conference on Security Cooperation in Europe
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
EAEG	East Asian Economic Group
EAS	East Asia Summit
EAVG	East Asia Vision Group
EEZs	exclusive economic zones
EU	European Union
FCCC	Framework Convention on Climate Change
FDI	foreign direct investment
G8	Group of 8
GDP	gross domestic product
GHG	greenhouse gas
GM	genetically modified
GMPI	Global Maritime Partnership Initiative
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
ICG	International Crisis Group
IHR	International Health Regulations
IMF	International Monetary Fund

IMO	International Maritime Organization
IRBM	intermediate-range ballistic missile
ISA	Internal Security Act (Malaysia)
ISC	Information Sharing Centre
ISPS	International Ship and Port Facility Security
JI	Jemaah Islamiyah
LNG	liquefied natural gas
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
MEAs	multilateral environmental agreements
MILF	Moro Islamic Liberation Front
MNLF	Moro National Liberation Front
MWe	megawatt electric
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NFU	no first use
NGO	non-governmental organisation
NPA	New People's Army
NPT	Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty
NRDC	Natural Resources Defense Council
NSAB	National Security Advisory Board
ODA	overseas development assistance
OIE	World Organization for Animal Health
OPEC	Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PSI	Proliferation Security Initiative
PWR	pressurised water reactor
ReCAAP	Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia
ROK	Republic of Korea
RSC	regional security complex
SAR	Maritime Search and Rescue Convention
SARS	severe acute respiratory syndrome
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organisation
SEATO	Southeast Asia Treaty Organization
SLOCs	sea lines of communication
SOLAS	Safety of Life at Sea Convention

SRBM	short-range ballistic missile
TAC	Treaty of Amity and Cooperation
TSD	Trilateral Security Dialogue
UN	United Nations
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
WMD	weapons of mass destruction
WTO	World Trade Organization

1 Setting the context

William T. Tow

Asia has arguably become the most critical region in an evolving international order. Geopolitically, the region includes three of the world's great powers – China, Japan and India – and two others, the United States and Russia, lie just beyond its peripheries and interact with it extensively. Demographically, over half of the world's total population is Asian and that total is forecast to reach 60 per cent by 2050 (United Nations [1999](#)). Economically, it is projected that China and India alone will account for more than 50 per cent of global growth between 2005 and 2030 (*Economist* [2006a](#)).¹ Militarily, four key players in the broader Asia-Pacific – the US, Russia, China and North Korea – are nuclear weapons states. Asian defence budgets constitute the world's largest arms market (US\$150 billion in purchases between 1990 and 2002) and the region's 'defence transformation' programmes are growing (Bitzinger [2004](#); IISS [2006b](#): 398–401; Tellis [2006a](#)). The combination of spectacular regional economic growth, the cultural and religious diversity of its massive population base and the sheer material resources it will generate and consume over the course of this century justify the observation that '(t)here is now a broad consensus that the Asian continent is poised to become the new center of gravity in global politics' (Tellis [2006a](#): 3).

Security analysts are increasingly concerned with how Asian security politics will affect international security or will, in turn, be influenced by global events and structures. 'Offensive realists' such as John Mearsheimer, for example, view global security as a precarious power equilibrium between states exercising hegemony in their own regions but obsessed with precluding any one of them from exercising outright global hegemony. China and the United States, Mearsheimer argues, will inevitably vie for global predominance with Asia as the major arena, precipitating a hegemonic war (Mearsheimer [2001](#)). Intensified competition between an expanding NATO that now cultivates links with four Asia-Pacific 'contact countries' (Australia, Japan, New Zealand and South Korea) and a Shanghai Cooperation Organisation led by a geopolitically resurgent Russia and an increasingly self-confident China would appear to authenticate this scenario. A more optimistic variant of great power balancing strategies (i.e., adapting a concert

approach) for East Asia anticipates the need to implement a judicious mix of diplomatic and institutional pathways to stabilise regional relationships (Goldstein [2003](#); for a more sceptical assessment, see Acharya [1999](#)).

Others, including regional security complex theorists, insist Asia's regional security structure can be distinguished from global security dynamics (although admitting that the two levels often overlap) and that the regional-level structure is at least as important as the global level in determining the region's relative stability. Barry Buzan has insisted that because Asia contains great powers, 'Asian regional security dynamics have stronger links to the global level in both directions than one would expect in the global-regional links of a standard region where the global level might well penetrate stronger into the regional' (Buzan [2003](#): 149). The *degree* or *intensity* of global penetration, however, is contested. Various analysts have noted, for example, that the United Nations has often been an 'adjunct' rather than a primary force in shaping the Asian security order. This has been due to superpower competition in the region during the Cold War marginalising the UN's roles and influence, Asian states' postcolonial scepticism about Security Council motives, and lingering irredentist disputes in the region. Yet extra-regional powers such as the US and Russia often have and still do intervene in Asian regional security issues without the *imprimatur* of international institutions or regimes if they perceive their own national security interests and their particular visions of 'global stability' threatened by such issues. Given the perceived weakness of regional institutions such as ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) in alleviating past and present major Asian disputes, that such incursions by both regional and external powers have occurred is hardly surprising (Foot [2003](#); Harada and Tanaka [1999](#): 324).²

Another school of thought contends that a growing array of 'transnational security' threats and challenges defies any arbitrary delineation between 'regional' and 'global' security politics. Demographic pressures, resource depletion, forced migration, climate change, international crime, pandemics and global terrorism constitute 'human security' problems that challenge us all and bestow the onus of security management directly upon those elites who must decide which specific issues will be prioritised or 'securitised' on our behalf.³ None of the major and contending approaches in international relations theory – realism, liberal-institutionalism or constructivism – is sufficient to effectively embrace this range of transnational security

dilemmas. This is not just a matter of integrating these approaches into an effective conceptual hybrid (see the discussion of analytical eclecticism below). Rather, transnational security and its human security derivatives underscore the primacy of individual security and welfare in an increasingly globalised interdependent world.

In contrast to this 'seamless' or 'boundary-neutral' version of security politics, however, East Asian elites have often embraced transnational security to reinforce their own style of collective decision-making and to achieve their own nationalist and regionalist visions. The 'ASEAN way' of reaching consensus via low-key and highly private consultations between Asian elites on such issues as climate change, pandemic management or forced migration is illustrative. Establishing whether security is best considered from a 'top-down' (global or state-centric hierarchical-based) or 'bottom-up' (individual or non-state actor-based) perspective remains a core problem for approaching contemporary security politics and it is particularly difficult when addressing transnational security challenges.⁴ Ascertaining what specific framework is best used to reconcile the inherent levels of analysis question posed by these challenges reflects the overall importance and difficulty of reconciling regional and global security dynamics in an increasingly complex international security arena.

While understanding of the 'regional–global nexus' as it applies to the Asian security approach remains elusive, the importance of such comprehension is undisputed. Both Asia and the world are at a historical crossroad, undergoing monumental structural change. In this context, a group of experts in Asian and international security politics convened a workshop at the Australian National University, Canberra, in August 2006. The workshop had the objective of building on previous efforts to understand how Asian security issues link with their global equivalents. Such knowledge is increasingly compelling as international security problems are more and more shaping the dynamics of Asian security politics.

The regional and international security environment that materialises from this evolution will be forged by Asia's interaction with global security issues. To project the shape of that environment, a brief summary of recent efforts to conceptualise Asian security politics by applying standard international relations theory will be initially offered. A discussion follows on how the 'regional–global nexus' – this book's primary concern – derives from and adds value to these efforts. The final section justifies the book's analytical

framework.

Integrating theory and Asian security: precedents

Contemporary literature on Asian security has yielded extensive and profound insights on how such key security concepts as ‘order’, ‘stability’, ‘polarity’ and ‘community’ interrelate at various levels of analysis. Yet its collective relevance and application to a regional–global security nexus remains elusive. This is due to the murkiness that invariably emerges when contending security paradigms are addressed somewhat randomly or in the spirit of eclecticism. This volume is intended to ascertain with greater clarity why these two levels of analysis are central to understanding and assessing Asia's security politics. Before outlining how it will do so, however, a brief review will be offered of several widely discussed studies that have been conducted to understand how the greater ‘Asia-Pacific’ relates to and affects the overall post-Cold War international security environment and how this process can be explained in both theoretical and empirical terms.⁵

Two books edited by Muthiah Alagappa ([1998](#), [2003](#)) confronted this fundamental question by considering how international relations theory can help explain the interrelationships of material power, ideational perceptions and order-building dynamics within Asia. Both books were landmark and comprehensive efforts to explore why competing theories of international relations could be discriminately but collectively employed to help explain and understand the management of security policies and order in Asia.⁶ Alagappa's edited works were designed to be pathbreaking efforts to bridge international relations theory and area studies supported by in-depth empirical evidence. ‘Security’ in an Asian context was also treated in both volumes as a dichotomous trend: combining analysis about a regional preoccupation on order-building and hierarchy with a relatively flexible tolerance by Asian elites for ‘conceptual traveling’ if it could eventually generate the important result of demarcating effective approaches for shaping credible and enduring security norms and practices. Critically, the regional level of analysis was clearly assigned priority over global security dynamics because of Asian regional powers’ greater salience in a post-Cold War setting and because of interdependence intensifying at the regional level below the purview of the world's single remaining superpower, the US.

The Alagappa compendiums have been subject to only mild criticisms and

these have been constructive in generating additional questions on how even a more integrated conceptual consensus might be achieved. Concerns raised in relation to the second Alagappa book, in particular, focused around: (1) the limited context in which the notion of Asian 'order' is developed and explained; (2) a perhaps over-optimistic tone adopted by the book in describing Asian 'stability'; (3) a tendency to underplay the role of the US in the shaping of Asian 'regionalism'; and (4) a perceived failure to sufficiently reconcile the disparate theories used to describe different aspects of Asian security. The fourth concern has perhaps been the most enduring: others who have followed Alagappa in favouring an 'inclusiveness approach' to understanding Asian security nevertheless have decried both volumes' tendencies to 'fit too many explanatory variables under one cover, without an overarching intellectual theme that ties the variables together' – a tendency that has been labelled 'additive complementarity' (Carlson and Suh [2004](#): 231–2; Kihl [2006](#): 6–7).

Alagappa responded to many of these points in a special workshop convened in Taipei to discuss his second volume in late 2004. Nevertheless, he acknowledged that additional work is required to understand the nature and consequence of changing distributions of economic and political power and resultant patterns of hierarchy or interdependence, the patterns of institutionalisation as they work within and beyond regional confines, and how such institutions incorporate 'socialisation and learning functions' that may emanate from extra-regional sources. One of the workshop commentators observed that while 'multiple pathways' are needed to explain Asia's contemporary security environment, both state-level factors (i.e., national economic growth and the development of military power) and extra-regional variables such as American global hegemony, alliances and international multilateral mechanisms must be integrated in a system-level analysis of Asian security (Zhang [2005](#): 240). Despite the comprehensiveness of Alagappa's analytical sweep, the levels of analysis clearly remained an impediment to consensus on the Asian security paradigm.

Another influential and constructive study of Asian security was edited by G. John Ikenberry and Michael Mastanduno and appeared in 2003. It offered alternative 'images' of the Asian security order as they related to the increased role that Asian states are playing in 'the larger international system' (Ikenberry and Mastanduno [2003a](#): 422). More structurally oriented, and less concerned with the nature and interworkings of regional order than the

Alagappa volumes, *International Relations Theory and the Asia-Pacific* focuses on regional power relations as a component of the global security environment. Its basic concern is to assess the extent that three major powers – the US, China and Japan – form the core security cluster driving Asian security dynamics and how that cluster relates to prospects for American post-Cold War hegemony. They employ what they term five ‘frames’ that comprise relevant theoretical approaches to understanding stability in the Asian security environment: (1) balance of power; (2) styles of hegemony; (3) history and memory; (4) domestic and international institutions; and (5) economic interdependence. Incorporating the work of some of the same analysts that contributed to the Alagappa texts, most of its chapter selections pursue the question as to whether Western or ‘European-centred’ international relations theory is useful in evaluating Asia-Pacific politics and security. David Kang's chapter represents a notable exception insofar as it appeals for the development of a localised-hierarchical ‘Asian’ model to explain Asian security politics (Kang [2003b](#): 164).

The Ikenberry/Mastanduno book differs from Alagappa's volumes, however, by underscoring the ongoing weakness of existing Asian security institutions relative to their European counterparts. It posits that the United States' early postwar decision to manage power in Asia not by institutionalisation (along the lines of NATO) but by hierarchy (through its bilateral system of alliances there), established ‘path dependence’ that has since inhibited the establishment of more robust Asian security institutions (Duffield [2003](#): 256–8). If this interpretation is correct, American power has imposed constraints on Asian order-building that impede an Asian capability to shape and manage regional order autonomously, refuting the arguments of Kang and others who insist that more region-centric models can be applied to this process. On the other hand, American power endows the Asian region with ‘breathing space’ for developing more self-reliant institutions and processes for achieving security. That power applies distant but useful ‘offshore balancing’ that is devoid of the historical and cultural baggage that could otherwise impede the successful application of indigenous models.⁷

As noted by one of its reviewers, *International Relations Theory and the Asia-Pacific* renders an invaluable service by testing the contending American policies of engagement and containment of China against the theoretical perspectives that drive the actual choices and risks involved in opting for either approach (Stuart [2004](#)). Those few critiques that have been

directed towards this book focus on what they deem to be an interpretation of Asian security politics that is arguably too 'American-centric' (Carlson and Suh [2004](#): 231). In reality, the editors simply identify the US role as a 'crucial variable' in successful conflict management and future regional stability in Asia. This is a 'top-down' perspective; it underplays how US power intersects with emerging regional institutions affecting the evolving international security order (Carlson and Suh [2004](#): 232). Indeed, one could make a strong case that American power has been as much a source of regional insecurity or instability as solidity, that American hierarchy has been at least partly overcome by the growth of regionally indigenous diplomacy minimising the path dependency factor.⁸ The book's nearly exclusive emphasis on the US, China and Japan reflects an American 'globalist' perspective that risks marginalising South Korea's and ASEAN's role in region-centric order-building, despite Alastair Iain Johnston's fine chapter on the 'ASEAN way' (Johnston [2003](#); Stuart [2004](#)). That chapter focuses primarily on the China–ASEAN dyad; it is less concerned about how ASEAN and the ARF shape institutional politics in Asia. If Alagappa's edited studies can be accused of being overly 'region-centric', the Ikenberry/Mastanduno compendium (and especially its concluding chapter) might be regarded as over-emphasising the future course of US geopolitical behaviour as the cardinal determinant for how the Asian security order will be determined.

J. J. Suh, Peter J. Katzenstein and Allen Carlson have argued in their recent study on *Rethinking Security in East Asia* that the problems outlined in both the Alagappa and Ikenberry/Mastanduno studies are largely overcome by 'analytical eclecticism': the selective merging of competing realist, liberal and constructivist research traditions to form a set of observations or 'explanatory sketches' to generate 'a causally significant understanding of empirically significant outcomes' (Katzenstein and Sil [2004](#): 13). If applied effectively, analytical eclecticism will enrich the study of Asian security by expanding its parameters of reference beyond those currently imposed by separate, predominant, realist, liberal and constructivist research traditions (Katzenstein and Sil [2004](#): 21–2). It will overcome the 'naturally' pessimist realist assumption that in the absence of robust norms and institutions, Asia is destined to be a war-ridden area of the world (if this has not happened yet, 'just wait').⁹ It will safeguard against overly optimistic liberal prognoses of regional economic development that were in effect prior to the Asian

financial crisis. It will modify constructivist predictions about the cultivation of a sufficiently homogeneous regional identity to realise security community-building or (more pessimistically) to sustain long-standing historical-cultural animosities. Analytical eclecticism thus can serve as a useful braking mechanism for modifying the excesses of each paradigm but also nurture the particular strengths of each approach in ways that can interrelate to draw better analogies, comparisons and conclusions about Asian security trends.

To at least some extent, the arguments projected in *Rethinking Security in East Asia* are reflected in Katzenstein's (2005) commensurate and seminal work, *A World of Regions: Asia and Europe in the American Imperium*. Both studies have been widely and properly acclaimed. Yet both have incurred similar concerns to those engendered by the Alagappa and Ikenberry/Mastanduno books, notwithstanding Suh's and Carlson's arguments found in their concluding chapter of *Rethinking Security* aimed to overcome such criticism.

First, while those employing the 'explanatory sketches' of analytical eclecticism may intend it to be a safeguard against the excesses of single-theory application, they are so 'risk-averse' as to preclude the adoption of *any* theoretical elucidation for understanding Asian security's empirical dynamics. In the vernacular, explanatory sketches may 'tie one up in knots' via 'nitpicking' and thus inhibit conclusions being soundly reached on an otherwise valid basis of evidence supporting a realist perspective in one area of enquiry or liberal or constructivist orientations in another. Kang has captured the essence of this problem as part of his appeal for deriving more 'Asia-centric' theories for explaining Asian security: more than a pot-pourri consisting of 'a touch of realism, a dash of constructivism and a pinch of liberalism' is required if contemporary questions of regional security are to be addressed in ways that acquire meaning for those policy-makers that must deal with them on a time-urgent basis and in an inevitably prioritised context (Kang 2003a: 59). 'Hybridising' paradigms under such conditions with the leisure normally related to the evolution of academic discourse are simply inadequate. What may be more promising is an 'action-oriented' model recently proposed by Young Whan Kihl – a 'syncretistic' approach that combines theory-building with field observation over specific timeframes and 'participation analysis' such as policy elite interviews. Integrating empirical data that emerges from such observation and data acquisition with a

theoretical 'fit' seems a desirable method of deriving causal explanations (Kihl [2006](#)).

A second concern stems from *Rethinking Security in East Asia*'s somewhat controversial preference for sustained US policy ambiguity in Asia as a necessary precondition for regional stability and order-building. As a global power, the US must project explicitly defined interests and order-building preferences that, whenever possible, avoid misperceptions and reflect leadership through engagement. The book's editors observe that '[regional] stability stands on a precarious, unidimensional foundation' that successive American administrations often (and unconsciously?) attempt to disrupt by imposing a 'narrow, binary framework of force', presumably in the form of reinforcing alliance politics or imposing the doctrine of strategic pre-emption against sceptical unwilling Asian societies (Carlson and Suh [2004](#): 230–1). However, the dangers of China misinterpreting American 'imperial' intentions, of ASEAN not being allowed to sustain its soft balancing strategies against larger powers so as to negotiate their own interests and identities and of the US confusing its role on the Korean peninsula between extending deterrence and pre-empting North Korea, all combine to mitigate those 'subtle sources of Asian stability' that are sustained by strategic ambiguity.

Resigning oneself to the permanent condition of ambiguity in the Asian security environment appears to be a tacit concession to the realist vision of permanent anarchy as inherent to international security relations. It allows little room for institutionalist or constructivist approaches to supplement interest-oriented diplomacy in Asia from either a regional or American vantage point and thus is hardly 'eclectic'. It also reflects a subconscious anti-American bias to the extent that policy flowing from Washington is viewed as inevitably problematic. This tendency also emerges in Katzenstein's other works: although globalisation is represented as making regionalism more 'porous' or open in nature, US primacy nevertheless is characterised as impeding a genuinely mutual process of interaction between the imperial power and the region of concern (Lewis [2006](#): 282). In fact, as the recent formation of ASEAN+3 (ASEAN plus China, Japan and South Korea), the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) and the East Asia Summit (EAS) all clearly demonstrate, regionalism in Asia is not under the control of the US or its bilateral alliance system but may be facilitated by them through the latter providing sufficient 'breathing space' for the mechanisms and identities

underwriting these initiatives to mature over time. As Alagappa (2006) has noted, ‘a concept that captures the mutuality of interaction between actors and processes at the two levels would be more useful in understanding the global–regional nexus and its implications.’

Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security written by Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver and published in 2003 is a monumental work that argues that the world and its security are best understood by envisioning it as a series of ‘regional security complexes’ that are distinct from both the international security system and from ‘local’ (intra-state or state-centric) units within that system. Because it devotes substantial analysis to understanding the interrelationship between regional and global security components, of all the works assessed in this section it comes closest to addressing the issues that are the central concern of this volume (Buzan and Wæver 2003).¹⁰ Buzan and Wæver are careful to specify that while the concept of ‘global security’ is naturally macro-analytical or ‘top-down’ in its orientation, it is *not* synonymous with ‘the whole international system’ when applied to the problem of regional–global interrelationships. No real consensus exists over what constitutes the ‘systematic’ structure in a post-Cold War security environment (American unipolarity? Competitive great power multipolarity? An emerging great power concert? A ‘war between civilisations’?) (Bell 2003; Huntington 1996). In the absence of such consensus, state-centric sovereignty and territoriality nevertheless plays a key role in the formation and maintenance of international security norms and institutions. The significance of the ‘globalist approaches’ advocated by the neo-realist camp in international relations theory to shaping contemporary international security politics cannot be overplayed – but that of more distinct regional configurations cannot be underestimated (Buzan and Wæver 2003: 28–30).

The problem invoked by this observation, however, is that one must delineate how various regional security components and issues ‘fit’ into whatever global security system may be operating at a given time. In turn, how regional security complexes must develop and operate in response to continuities and changes in the global security environment must also be explained (see Gleditsch 2005). The best indication that *Regions and Powers* offers us to meet these requirements is an East Asian regional security complex that conforms to a ‘1+4’ power configuration (what Buzan and Wæver term a ‘global dynamic’) where the ‘1’ is the US superpower and the

‘4’ are the regional powers of China, Japan, Russia and the European Union (EU). Yet the authors concede that China's rising power base could easily change this configuration into a new global pattern more attuned to the Soviet–American dyad (2 superpowers + x great powers including Russia, the EU and perhaps India). The ‘revised’ polarity would still reflect a predominant East Asian component.¹¹

Reconciling the ‘global–regional nexus’

Where does this inventory of recent works on Asia's security politics lead relative to understanding that region's interrelationships to global security? What specific questions remain to be assessed for understanding the growing impact of Asia within an increasingly complex and potentially turbulent international security environment? Three major areas of enquiry seem particularly relevant.

By now it is clear that predictions of unmitigated US global hegemony that were rampant during the early 1990s were premature. The Bush administration, in particular, overestimated the utility of military technology and the appeal of Western ideals for transforming the rest of the world into a polity with which Washington would be most comfortable. It also underestimated China and ASEAN's ability to adapt to structural change on their own terms following the Asian financial crisis and 11 September 2001. There is certainly little resemblance in the current international security environment to the *pax Americana* that American neo-conservatives imagined could be established at the outset of this century.

Indeed, the international security order that does exist appeared to become increasingly fragmented and contested, lacking enforceable universal norms and institutions that command consensus for shaping a more harmonious and enduring global order. As the Iraq quagmire intensified, US power seemed less able to shape the international security framework that does exist. The UN was often undermined by its permanent Security Council members' geopolitical predilections. In the absence of a strong hierarchical or hegemonic force, do stronger regional security complexes of the type envisioned by Buzan and Wæver or their derivatives in the form of contemporary regional integration movements represent the most viable approach to building a more stable world?¹² To answer this question, the structures and processes underlying both ‘regional security’ and ‘global

security' must be carefully explored in terms of how and why they are linked. Just as importantly, the appropriate 'mix' between theoretical propositions and empirical analysis needs to be identified in order to allay policy-makers' scepticism that theoretical treatises churned out by the academic sector are little more than a recipe for ambiguity.

A second major concern is that consensus is lacking over the *type* of Asian security order that will be responsible for helping to shape global security structures. In part, this is due to different interpretations of how synonymous the structuring of global security is with the expansion or reduction of American power. However, discord over the structural context of any Asian–global security dynamic goes beyond the 'American factor' to a debate about how specific 'flashpoints' or 'security dilemmas' (that is, the Korean peninsula, Taiwan or a nuclear-armed subcontinent) transcend exclusively 'region-centric' strategic concerns and become fully globalised in their scope and ramifications. The 'four images' introduced by Ikenberry and Mastanduno in their edited book's final chapter relate to this problem. For example, will China become a 'responsible stakeholder' within a US-centred world order or instead try to reshape that order by leading a predominant Asian regional security complex within it (Ikenberry and Mastanduno [2003a](#): 424)?¹³ Or will it contest the US and other great powers within Asia in ways that will generate a bipolar or multipolar regional balance of power? Or, in a perhaps less likely scenario, can an Asia fuelled by the vision of growing regional prosperity that requires an ever stronger global marketplace eventually develop a 'shared sense of community' that will lead to a 'Europeanised' type of regional order largely devoid of tensions and security dilemmas (Severino [2006](#): 342–71)?¹⁴ Unlike the Ikenberry/Mastanduno thesis that future US power will inevitably be the key cause leading to any of these outcomes, this volume will explore a variety of factors that individually or together could shape Asia's future security order and how that order correlates with overall global stability. These include China's bilateral ties with other key regional powers (Japan and India) and actors (ASEAN or other institutions); the role of economics in security; how democratic values relate to regional community-building; and the interplay of transnational security factors with traditional state-centric variables.

A third area justifying greater assessment flows from this last component: the linkages between the traditional levels of security analysis (state-centric, regional and global) and emerging transregional security issues that are

certain to increasingly dominate both Asian and extra-regional policy-makers' agendas. The second Alagappa volume published in 2003, along with Alan Dupont's ([2001](#)) widely discussed work on the politics of alternative security, incorporated analysis linking regional order-building with non-traditional security issue management (the other works discussed above were less concerned with this dimension of Asian security). Both the Alagappa and Dupont volumes, however, were published too soon after 11 September to evaluate the full impact of such contingencies as global terrorism and Southeast Asia's position on radical Islamist movements found within its peripheries, the increasing relationship between energy security and maritime security, intensifying environmental challenges as they relate to transnational crime and to global warming, the looming dangers of regional pandemics exploding into global epidemics and the Bush administration's single-minded determination to export democracy to a myriad of peoples and cultures. The evolving processes that have been applied by states, regions or institutions in response to these challenges merit in-depth discussion as a component of regional–global security relations.

The way forward

This book is thus divided into three broad sub-themes: (1) developing the global–regional security nexus as a broad theoretical concept and assessing the potential value of this concept to regional and international security policy-makers; (2) relating the security nexus question to how an Asian regional security order could unfold; and (3) ascertaining how emerging key security issues that increasingly influence international security policy formulation are evolving in an Asian context.

Developing the concept

Brian Job ([chapter 2](#)) commences the first section ([Part I](#)) of this volume by directly addressing the security nexus question. He initially considers how the changing international security framework is being shaped by key security actors in Asia, and argues that key Asia-Pacific states have been increasingly integral to shaping the global security system. Asserting that the Asia-Pacific is a major driver for how the international security system is evolving, Job incorporates a 'levels of analysis' framework for explaining how the region is now a major 'centre of gravity' for international security politics.

He observes that the regional–global nexus is currently indeterminate in an

Asia-Pacific context. Exactly demarcating the relationship between material and non-material factors that together comprise any such 'nexus', therefore, is an impossibly elusive undertaking. Short of offering a highly refined causal explanation for how the regional–global nexus precisely works, he nevertheless offers a comprehensive taxonomy of those perspectives favouring the regionalist perspective to provide a theoretical framework that might serve as a basis for further exploring the problem of nexus. He then reviews selected material and ideational factors to test his propositions: those elements relevant to forging the idea of 'region', those instrumental for differentiating 'global' from 'systemic' in international security politics, and those instrumental to underwriting or testing hegemonic behaviour at both the regional and global levels of analysis. After weighing the 'centre of gravity' concept in some depth, he concludes that future efforts to reconcile the regional and global levels of analysis and to understand where the centre of gravity is leading must entail more cohesive investigation than merely relying on analytical eclecticism or other random hybrids of the realist, normative and ideational outlooks to security both in Asia and in the international system.

Michael Wesley ([chapter 3](#)) contemplates the postwar role of multilateralism and the institutions it has spawned, both regionally and globally, in shaping the Asia-Pacific and international orders. Tensions between regionalism and globalism have been generated in Asia by three fundamental dynamics: (1) the extent to which institutions that have arisen there complement or balance the US bilateral alliance system; (2) the degree to which regional institutions' architects and adherents have applied them towards enhancing the Asia-Pacific's global influence; and (3) the point to which such institutions reflect and adjudicate the region's own evolving balance of power. Wesley examines factors of 'institutional sclerosis' that have impeded the relevance and inhibited the reform required for Asia-Pacific multilateral security initiatives and organisations to complement or supplant the American-led 'San Francisco system' of regional alliances more effectively. In large part, this can be attributed to a striking difference found in postwar US attitudes towards imposing an American version of international order in Asia as opposed to Europe: Washington was intent on comprehensively reconstructing European societies following the demise of Adolf Hitler's Third Reich; it was satisfied to impose a 'minimalist approach' to order-building in the Asia-Pacific that merely ensured its own global

power would not be contested by new patterns of hegemonic rise emanating from within that region. Catalysts for Asia-Pacific institution-building have thus been self-generated, largely in response to distinct and often unexpected catalysts: the emergence of an 'Asian values' movement, the shock of the Asian financial crisis and the phenomenon of China's remarkable economic growth are illustrative. Wesley concludes that in the absence of institutional reform and viability needed to manage overall international security, Asia-Pacific institutions will either develop sufficiently to moderate great power rivalries in the region or will themselves become conduits for those rivalries to be played out. The challenge is to identify the pathway to institutional development that will command the support of all parties beyond merely fulfilling the purpose of balancing or excluding rival powers.

Michael Mastanduno ([chapter 4](#)) assesses American power as the core element for bridging the Asian and global security orders. Arguing that the United States remains the world's uncontested global hegemon, he nevertheless observes that American global strategy that was formerly 'region-centric' is no longer viable as events in one region increasingly affect developments in others and in ways that directly impact upon US interests and resources. Washington, however, has yet to adjust to this new reality. It is most likely, he asserts, to 'muddle along reactively', lacking the geopolitical vision and posture commensurate to its ascent to global hegemony at the outset of the postwar era and to its clear determination to exercise uncontested hegemony after its demise. US hegemonic strategy during the 1990s, however, was conservative, reactive and risk-averse: sensitive to the domestic political ramifications of battlefield casualties, the attritional effects of protracted US military deployments and the negative ramifications of force-feeding economic liberalism to newly emergent market economies. Asia's regional pressures and conflicts would be defused or contained by strengthening existing alliance frameworks and encouraging 'open regionalism'.

The eleventh of September, Mastanduno asserts, transformed the US superpower from a status quo power to a revisionist one. The 'triple combination' of terrorism, rogue states and weapons of mass destruction (WMD) shifted US policy-makers' worldview from one where the international system was moving in ways favourable to the United States to one where time was no longer on America's side. The Asia-Pacific allies were increasingly valued for their relative willingness (and capability) to become

partners in 'coalitions of the willing' and to help Washington confront new risks surfacing in both regional and extra-regional settings: the Persian Gulf, Central Asia and Southeast Asia. This is even more the case as the Asian region becomes more 'dynamic' and the politico-strategic risks incurred for intervening militarily in the region rise commensurately. The US has become more 'risk acceptant' since the Iraq War. However, the US electorate's disillusionment with its foreign policy of pre-emption and interventionism is increasing at a time when East Asian stability is also coming under increased strain: that is, deteriorating Sino-Japanese relations, an intractable Taiwan crisis and an ever more bellicose North Korea. The problem Washington faces is that 'its ability to serve as a regional stabiliser is seriously constrained by the developments that have taken place since 11 September' and that 'those in East Asia who prefer a sustained US regional role will perceive that the United States is too preoccupied in the Middle East and Persian Gulf to make more than cosmetic attempts'. Under such conditions, Chinese 'soft power' and other regionally indigenous diplomacy will compare favourably to an American hegemon that is seemingly so distracted or preoccupied with an amorphous war on terrorism that it is prepared to reduce its force presence in Asia on the rationale that 'everything is moving elsewhere' at the global security level.

In assessing how a 'rising China' affects the regional–global nexus, Hugh White and Brendan Taylor ([chapter 5](#)) assert that the reluctance of China and the US to cooperate in managing power relations and order-building in the Asia-Pacific will have negative ramifications for international security. Without greater acknowledgement – even deference – to China's aspirations for assuming a leadership role in the region, future economic and security crises in the region may posit greater risks for precipitating Sino-American confrontation. Any such conflict would have dire implications for global security.

The actual prospects for this tradeoff occurring, however, are limited due to the probable intercession of material and ideational impediments. These include a perpetual American tendency to view force build-ups in China as inherently threatening to US global primacy and national security interests. They also entail other key regional actors such as Japan and ASEAN more readily coming to terms with a China growing strong. Future US competition with China will invariably occur in 'broader' security sectors (also known as 'soft power' components) of energy politics, diplomacy, economic growth

and trade relations and a fundamental incompatibility over political values. A preferred Sino-American condominium arrangement might take the form of a tacit concert or 'duet' formed to achieve greater capacity for regional conflict management and the mutual projection of power by these two states to realise greater international stability and prosperity. For China to adjust to such a power-sharing arrangement will be challenging but feasible, given its recent Cold War experience with adjudicating its position *vis-à-vis* two superpowers. For the US, such an adjustment, White and Taylor argue, will be more taxing given its universalist legacy of asserting its interests and values in the international arena with little or no compromise. Hence the chapter concludes with a pessimistic bent that reluctantly posits the dire realist scenarios outlined by Mearsheimer and others as a very distinct possibility.

Structural and normative outlooks

Part II of this book focuses on how key material and ideational factors are shaping the regional–global nexus. Particular attention is directed towards the structural issue of how enduring systemic authority or 'hegemony' will be as many Asian states experience the most dynamic change in their history. Attention is also directed towards how likely the forces of liberalisation in both normative and economic terms are developing at the national level or permeating from a more interdependent world in ways that generate new factors of regional competition (contested primacy between great powers) or cooperation (such as community-building).

Evelyn Goh ([chapter 6](#)) offers an in-depth examination that considers the development of an Asian power balance sustained by intricate strategies of both state-centric and institutional balancing, engagement and 'enmeshment'. Taking issue with some other contributors to this volume, she maintains that 'the US is not the "extra-regional" player that regionally indigenous states often assume it to be: it is at once a global superpower *and* a regional hegemon whose strategic interests and engagement constitute (not merely shape or define) the East Asian regional security order'. Nor should the US be viewed as an 'imperial' power in any Asian security order but as a benign hierarchical force that overlays more vigorous great power competition at the intra-regional level. As such, '(t)his formulation of US hegemony as regional hierarchy helps to overcome the problem of over-simplification faced by a levels of analysis treatment of the interaction between the "global" and

“regional” dimensions of security’. This plays to Job's assertion that unlocking the levels of analysis puzzle about where the regional–global nexus actually intersects is a major step in understanding the dynamics of Asia-Pacific influence in international security politics.

Along with preceding chapters, Goh's treatment of Sino-American relations relates to the problems of positionality and self-perception. Not unlike White and Taylor, she regards Chinese power to be niche-oriented and largely region-centric in scope. Ongoing US systemic primacy, however, provides greater consistency for policy elites to calculate how they can manage their own state's internal forces of change and manoeuvre among the American hegemon and the region's great powers to extract maximum strategic and economic gains. After presenting a comprehensive assessment of regional hierarchy in a postwar world, Goh concludes that US–Asian hierarchy ‘clarifies the regional dynamic’ by preventing the unleashing of nationalist forces and the intensification of regional security dilemmas if it did not exist. In this context, she challenges the model recently advanced by Kang that anticipates a Chinese-led regional hierarchy eventually and peacefully supplanting the current American-dominated system (Kang [2003a](#)). Goh anticipates that no alternative to US primacy would be better for ensuring Asia's regional security and could very well be much worse.

William Case ([chapter 7](#)) provides a specific case study of how political liberalisation at the national level flows into the regional–global nexus *problématique*. Cross-comparing authoritarian and relatively democratic Asian regimes to test the proposition that those with more democratic trappings will experience ‘better security outcomes’, he adopts a ‘bottom-up’ approach to the nexus previously referred to by Job. Specific dimensions of the post-Cold War security paradigm as it is evolving in both regional and international security politics are incorporated into his assessment, including economic growth and development, communal and class relations, and human rights.

Case deduces that after accounting for such outliers, ‘the comparative performance of democracy and authoritarianism...remains ambiguous’. While national security environments and infrastructures may be subject to new kinds of elites and social forces, democratic procedures have not appeared to be decisive in shaping various Asian states’ behaviour towards their own populaces or towards each other. This is a potentially ideational finding insofar as it directly refutes many generalisations recently advanced

by the ‘democratic peace’ school of thought and by other advocates of social liberalisation operating at both the regional and international levels of discourse and policy advocacy.

This section's third ‘vision’ for operationalising the regional–global nexus is offered by Sorpong Peou ([chapter 8](#)) in his treatise on East Asian security community-building. Adopting a somewhat different premise from Case, Peou exudes greater optimism over the capabilities of ideational forces to develop enduring norms and expectations commensurate with genuine community-building processes. The major problem in achieving regional stability, he argues, is not so much the ambiguity of democratic instrumentalities and processes leading to aberrant behaviour among Asian actors but the recent American propensity to rely upon raw material power for shaping a liberal order of its own choosing. US aspirations for determining how the world and, by extension, the Asia-Pacific will be managed – particularly in the context of a US–Japan condominium exercising primacy over Northeast Asia – have actually undermined regional community-building. Peou's observation that pluralistic community-building is an appropriate vision for Asia's future is clearly at odds with Goh's thesis that US dominance provides a stabilising overlay for an Asia populated by states that are more instrumental than idealistic and who would, in the absence of the American hegemon, become intense rivals, choosing intensified strategies of balancing and conflict to vie for regional power and primacy.

In many ways, the Asia-Pacific region has embraced the ‘human security’ concept as its own, reiterating constantly its determination to eliminate freedom from fear, freedom from want and freedom to live with dignity. With the post-11 September apprehensions over global terrorism accelerating regionally and globally, however, the human security ethos is now often linked to ‘fear of freedom’. Critics of Asian authoritarianism cite the danger of regional elites becoming increasingly prone to securitising the challenge of international terrorism as a means of merely legitimising their own domestic power bases at the expense of cultivating and upholding their populace's collective well-being. Akiko Fukushima and William Tow ([chapter 9](#)) assert that the human security dynamic is invariably more complex, however, than merely serving as an expedient tool for elites’ political manipulation of those they govern. Instead, it constitutes ‘a mutually reinforcing dynamic between state, societal and individual security’ that transcends different levels of

analysis along the regional–global security nexus and one that can only be ignored at one's own peril. The authors apply recent Japanese experiences in developing viable human security postures to test this proposition.

Fukushima and Tow identify three ‘preconditions’ for integrating traditional and human security approaches to craft more effective responses to future contingencies that can transcend borders and project common threats to global populations and resources: (1) minimising ideological rigidity as a basis for political action; (2) minimising hypocritical behaviour that may otherwise be justified in the context of ‘national security’ by consistently observing the rule of law; and (3) avoiding linkages of threat neutralisation with economic and development assistance. The coexistence of traditional and human security paradigms can be applied throughout Asia, they conclude, to reduce collective human anxieties and to bind institutional commitments towards achieving more egalitarian outcomes for the peoples who inhabit the region. To do so successfully, however, regional policy architects will need to induce the US and intra-regional great powers alike to explore alternative, ‘people-centric’ security politics even as they maintain alliances, build coalitions and otherwise pursue more traditional forms of strategy and diplomacy. Getting this coexistence right will determine the extent to which regional initiatives can address looming global security challenges of a non-military nature most effectively.

Economic regional integration's effects on tempering conflicts and underwriting institutional norms comprise the heart of John Ravenhill's ([chapter 10](#)) assessment of how the Asia-Pacific ‘economic security nexus’ reduces the prospect for systemic wars, even during times of significant power transition. In fact, Ravenhill asserts, the costs of conflict go up when power transitions take place within an increasingly interdependent system featuring the diffusion of transnational production centres, the decline of protectionism and the growth of multilateral institutions to regulate trade and investment liberalisation. Statistical evidence is reviewed that supports the liberal arguments about the relationship between interdependence and lower levels of conflicts applicable to the Asian region and, more specifically, to China. That country's integration into the global economy has been instrumental in precluding the development of a regional trading bloc, and has rendered China visibly more dependent on transnational production networks. Ravenhill surmises that any temptation by China or other regional powers to use military force for the securing of resource supplies is

outweighed by 'the potential loss of access to markets, finance, components and technology that would occur should an expansionary military policy be pursued'. Moreover, he concludes, globalisation creates domestic factions with 'internationalist outlooks' who perceive a major stake in ensuring the supply and production processes are not interrupted and have a vested interest in the strengthening of confidence-building between major trading states within and beyond regional parameters.

The security nexus and key issue-areas

This book's third section 'tests' those specific concerns that appear to be most relevant in linking Asia-Pacific and global security dynamics. The Bush administration's 2006 National Security Statement labelled such issues as 'challenges of globalisation'. Public health contingencies like 'pandemics', 'illicit trade in drugs and human beings' within the framework of human security concerns, and 'environmental destruction' were all cited under this category while nuclear non-proliferation, global terrorism and maritime/energy security were all assigned crucial status within the administration's overall international security policy framework. The administration also argued in this report that 'these challenges require effective democracies to come together in innovative ways' (Bush [2006](#)) – a proposition already tested and found wanting in Case's treatment of it in Part II.

Southeast Asia has often been deemed by US policy-makers as global terrorism's 'second front', supplementing the Middle East and Central Asia as a source of radical Islamist *jihad* (see, for example, Gershman [2002](#)). This image has been reinforced by various analysts affiliated with Southeast Asian think tanks and by regional academics who have strong professional and entrepreneurial interests in highlighting their own sensationalist interpretations of alleged linkages between Asian and international terrorism networks. Separating myth from fact often becomes an arduous task, however, requiring a sound empirical grounding on the agendas and actions generated by the myriad of ethnic and political groups located in that subregion. Greg Fealy and Carlyle Thayer ([chapter 11](#)) offer a dextrous, and admittedly provocative, interpretation of how and why myth perpetuation remains a lucrative if somewhat misguided cottage industry throughout Southeast Asia and how various methodological approaches can either modify or perpetuate this trend. They also focus on the more substantive

challenges that regional and extra-regional partners in counter-terrorism are likely to confront over the next decade, providing a particularly useful and nuanced assessment of Jemaah Islamiyah and al-Qaeda terrorist networks spanning the regional–global nexus with varying degrees of intensity.

North Korea's recent nuclear weapons and missile tests have once more highlighted Asia's increasingly central role in global nuclear politics.¹⁵ This development follows a virtual litany of significant WMD-related developments in Asia: the 1998 nuclear tests in India and Pakistan; the US application of ballistic missile technology to a 'theatre missile defence' system intended to defend Japan and other Asian allies from future nuclear strikes; the establishment of a Proliferation Security Initiative (2003) largely in response to the nuclear activities of North Korea and other 'states of concern'; and the collective development of small but technologically proficient nuclear forces by China, India and Pakistan. These developments bring into question the traditional scope of deterrence strategy (Asian nuclear powers are far more proximate to each other than were mutual Soviet and American targets during the Cold War) and its continued applicability in a twenty-first-century environment. 'Tripwires' and other forms of deterrence commitments may become less relevant as the number of nuclear players increase under an increasingly tenuous global nuclear non-proliferation regime.

Marianne Hanson and Rajesh Rajagopalan ([chapter 12](#)) weigh these considerations in a chapter underlined by their concern that existing norms in regional and global strategic behaviour have become 'unsettled' by nuclear posturing in both North Korea and South Asia. While recent developments point to greater transparency on this issue in both subregions and to only gradual and modest developments in nuclear weapons capabilities, it remains clear that the world's established nuclear powers have achieved little coordination in their approaches to non-proliferation regime management. The authors call for '[a] finely honed reservoir of strategic patience [that] blends well with a carefully calibrated sequence of policy carrots and sticks to condition those nuclear capabilities that do emerge into the broader international security framework'. It may be that WMD modernisation in specific Asian geographic sectors is being driven by 'mostly domestic and regional processes rather than global developments'. But as the North Korean nuclear test and the reactions to it by such powers as Japan, Iran and other states within and beyond Asia demonstrate, the global effects of such

processes are not guaranteed to proceed at a relaxed controllable pace of force modernisation and diplomatic compromise. The politics of managing WMD thus perhaps comes closer than any other issue area to demonstrating the imperative of demarcating and anticipating the centre of gravity that binds regional and global dimensions of security tensions in ways that render the levels of analysis problem less relevant to an increasingly threatened world.

The politics of maritime security and energy security are increasingly entwined by an array of economic factors, military concerns and international legal arrangements. Sam Bateman ([chapter 13](#)) comes to terms with this integration by presenting extensive analysis of how these components work in tandem to bridge 'Asia-Pacific' and global security politics. Yet he argues at the outset of his analysis that regional interests rather than global issues dominate Asia-Pacific maritime security debates, thereby weakening the nexus between global and regional security concerns. Resistance by regional littoral states to internationalise the security management of the Malacca strait relates directly to concerns about compromising sovereign prerogatives or weakening positions to territorial claims. The assets that are earmarked by maritime littoral states such as Malaysia and Indonesia reflect a distinctively local or regional orientation. It is one, however, that occasionally intersects what Bateman terms 'a classical Mahanian approach' of great power naval forces deploying in the area to extend regional strategic influence, through military exercises, port visits and other means to 'show the flag'. All such activities must be weighed in the context of unmitigated US naval superiority that prevails throughout the region but which is an extension of American offshore global power projection capabilities.

The international context of the maritime security question is further underscored by strong interest of Northeast Asia's great industrial economies in the 'security of shipping passing through the "choke points" of Southeast Asia, and in the competition for offshore oil and gas resources'. Recent tensions in energy markets have spurred China, India and other regional economies to find diverse methods of ensuring energy supplies, including the reconfiguration of traditional oil routes, the exploitation of new oil fields in distant locales and the accelerated development of alternative energy resources such as natural gas and nuclear power (Asia's oil consumption already surpasses that of the United States) (IISS [2006a](#): 53–66). Over the next decade, as Bateman notes very appropriately, maritime security regimes may assume a greater role in maritime and energy security management. To

do so, however, the United States as the primary Asia-Pacific security actor will need to demonstrate a greater commitment to supporting the viability of these arrangements. Regional naval capabilities could also be increasingly perceived as the best guarantee for sustaining the types of free trade and investment patterns (discussed in [chapter 10](#)) that modify international economic rivalries, thus stabilising the world in ways that make widespread international conflict less probable. The security of commercial shipping, of the ports where key refineries are often located, the control of offshore exclusive economic zones, the effects of oil stockpiling and the future viability of maritime security regimes as agents for bridging regional and international approaches to energy security policy all loom as major determinants of impending regional–global security dynamics. The current pattern of reluctance by Asian actors to participate in US-led maritime security initiatives due to sensitivities over issues of sovereignty could render such security even more difficult to achieve in the absence of viable regime politics finessing relevant compromises.

Environmental governance issues, particularly in the areas of climate change and trade in hazardous waste, are now recognised as constituting a major international security challenge. Aynsley Kellow ([chapter 14](#)) observes that ‘Eurocentric’ approaches to confronting these problems have been insufficiently pliable for application to specific Asian environmental security characteristics: the coexistence of wealthy or developed economies with developing ones and the prominent involvement of extra-regional expatriates in key production processes and technologies with less affinity towards how local populations may be affected by hazardous waste and recycling practices derived for other regions. Kellow employs a case study comparing the emphasis of the Asia-Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate (APP) on building technological approaches to slow emissions growth, and the Kyoto Protocol which has relied on binding commitments to achieve lower emissions ceilings. He concludes that imposed emissions ceilings would never restrain the Asia-Pacific's fastest growing economies (China and Japan) to conform with proscribed Protocol standards. The fundamental incompatibility between economic and development priorities that differentiate Asia and Europe illustrate that ‘regional solutions have in fact often proven far more appropriate than an exclusive reliance on global norms and laws, not to mention a weak global civil society that is still in its infancy’.

By contrast, Christian Enemark ([chapter 15](#)) investigates the more obvious causal relationships linking regional and global politics to controlling pandemics. The ‘framing issue’ underlying this challenge, however, is not dissimilar to that which applies to environmental security: the vulnerability of certain state actors to diseases that spill over to become a crisis of global proportions. Developing states regard the world's major pharmaceutical companies more as adversaries than facilitators because of their tendency to charge world market prices for critically needed drugs to stem illnesses among those least capable of paying for them. Nor are there sufficient international financial contributions to ensure that weak states achieve effective disease surveillance and containment. The intersection between the lack of Asia's overall capacity to stem the tide of those many viruses that originate in that region's poorer sectors and a global security interest to ensure that greater regional capacity to do so seems very sharp indeed. National security and securitisation elements also enter into the equation: how can regional governments develop enough consensus amongst their populaces to fund and implement key preventative measures?

The consequences of *not* ‘securitising’ these issues judiciously and procedurally are becoming ever more evident. The lack of discriminatory criteria for application to *specific* threats of disease has led to a haphazard approach of extending vigilance to all *possible* pandemics. Effective securitisation strategies of prevention may inherently need to start at the local or ‘bottom-up’ policy levels to preclude knee-jerk reactions at the regional or global levels of action when pandemic crises materialise and quickly become widespread. Enemark argues that in regard to the regional–global nexus, ‘the path to security is overwhelmingly through state and non-state actors cooperating to reduce collective vulnerability rather than a competition for power in the international order’.

Conclusion: a new policy agenda?

We are fortunate that Amitav Acharya, a renowned analyst of Asian security politics, has provided a concluding chapter for this volume. Acharya identifies two important concepts as embodying the regional–global security nexus: (1) *transregional security politics* (in an Asia-Pacific context); and (2) *contingent globalism*. Both ideas relate to how localities and regions are instrumental in selectively shaping the global order and both focus on the

critical notion that region-centric processes and values are as often balanced against the ongoing evolution of international security politics as they are integrated with it. Without encroaching upon his task of synthesising the basic findings of our chapter contributors, this introduction might logically be brought to a close by offering a brief synthesis summarising the overall discussion and objectives with which these chapters will deal. Readers will find within these chapters analyses of the following:

1. *The need to ascertain how regional security issues are affected by global challenges, threats and norms is critical.*

This is a ‘top-down’ analytical exercise and emulates the structural approaches of Buzan/Wæver and Ikenberry/Mastanduno. The critical variable here is how great powers located within or proximate to the region under study (that is, Japan, Russia, India and especially China) act on issues without regional boundaries such as nuclear non-proliferation, terrorism and transnational challenges such as the environment, disease and democratic ‘global governance’. In the absence of established regional norms and institutional procedures to confront such issues, global level security dynamics are more likely to penetrate and dominate regional outlooks and policies, thereby weakening regional identity and policy cohesion. If this assumption is valid, the arguments forwarded by former Malaysian Prime Minister Mohammad Mahathir ([1999](#)) and Singaporean analyst Kishore Mahbubani ([1995](#)) promoting ‘Asian values’ assume a greater resonance. However, China – now undoubtedly the region's most formidable power – appears to be acquiescing to, and increasingly leading, Asia's quest to become a more stable component within a world order. If this trend continues, the prospects for a regional–global *modus vivendi* increase commensurately as regional challenges and norms become increasingly regarded as synonymous with global equivalents.

2. *Determining how global security issues and practices affect Asia-Pacific security politics.*

That both Japan and India are vying for permanent voting status on the UN Security Council speaks volumes about Asian perceptions that global security politics 'matters' to their region. So too does a sustained and even increasing Asian willingness to contribute to extra-regional military interventions as members of 'coalitions of the willing' (Iraq and Afghanistan are recent examples) and to institutionalise inter-regional dialogues such as ASEM that spill over to assume geopolitical ramifications. Greater policy attention should be directed towards how Asian policy-makers view and how much they support alternative security regimes that would link Asia-Pacific and global security outlooks and behaviour: for example, the prospects of a Chinese regional 'hierarchy' spilling over to shape international geopolitics or the impact of Asian summit or 'security community' politics on the international management of key politico-economic dynamics. Traditional security issues delineated for special attention are cross-comparing the durability of alliance politics and security-institution trends in the Asia-Pacific with those on a more global scale (that is, Asia-Pacific bilateralism versus international multilateral precedents).

3. Assessing how Asia-Pacific regional politics helps shape international security.

A growing number of emerging regional security issues in the Asia-Pacific have significant spill-over effects for the world-at-large. Obvious examples include the interrelationship of Jemaah Islamiyah to international terrorism-at-large, the breadth of membership and inclusion of most great powers in both the ARF and APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation). In a more 'traditional' context, the Asia-Pacific is one of the three great sectors of global geopolitical competition (along with Europe and the Middle East) that are becoming increasingly interrelated in the strategic calculations of

the US and other great powers. Increasingly, US officials such as the Bush Administration's Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and the Pacific Christopher Hill have insisted that 'the United States is encouraging the development of multilateral structures for an increased sense of community in Asia, and...that European nations could offer useful insights and experience. "[C]ountries in Europe do have a very important role to play in East Asia ..."' (United States Mission to the European Union [2005](#)). To what extent this development transpires may be a key determinant of how viable future conflict avoidance is in the Asia-Pacific and how much that region will influence overall international security affairs.

4. *Encouraging innovative security solutions for distinctive security: the global–regional nexus.*

Perhaps most importantly, Asian security analysts must work with their international counterparts to determine whether viable international precedents can be applied to contemporary Asia-Pacific security management. These might include the introduction of regional confidence-building precedents (such as the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe); the initiation of conflict avoidance initiatives to regional 'flashpoints'; the transposing of innovative peacekeeping precedents that have worked in southeastern Europe or in parts of the developing world to ARF strategic reassurance practices; the imposition of international law and norms to Asia-Pacific disputes; and the application of both power-balancing and normative-based strategies to those security management challenges that apply equally to regional and global stability such as nuclear non-proliferation or arms control. If successfully implemented, these 'multiple pathways' or 'pillars of stability' could assist in overcoming the incessant dilemma of 'choosing' between 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' approaches for dealing with the regional–

global security nexus.

¹ Between 2001 and 2005, Asia contributed 21 per cent to the world's total economic growth compared to the United States' contribution of 19 per cent. Also see *Asia Times Online* ([2006](#)).

² Harada and Tanaka ([1999](#): 324) assert that great powers will not enter regional conflicts on their own or via international institutions unless their own national security interests are directly involved. Hence, 'Asian countries...are confronted with the challenge of devising some mechanisms to resolve regional conflicts on their own.'

³ The definitive source on transregional security politics in East Asia is Dupont ([2001](#)). Also see Tow, Thakur and Hyun ([2000](#)). The 'securitisation' concept was developed by the so-called 'Copenhagen School' and can be regarded as society or its representative elites viewing an issue as a threat to its constructed identity and responding to such a perceived threat with specific policies. See Wæver ([1995](#)) and Buzan and Wæver ([1997](#)). Critics of this concept accuse its adherents of misrepresenting 'social identity' as a fixed construct rather than as a constantly changing process. See McSweeney ([1996](#)). The concept of securitisation is defended as a relevant approach to Asian security politics by Emmers ([2004](#)), but is criticised by Sato ([2005](#)) who deems it as little more than an alternative constructivist approach to historical interpretation that offers little new to our understanding of why Asia may be 'different' from other regions in choosing what to regard as a security issue.

⁴ T. J. Pempel notes, however, that the 'top-down/bottom-up' perspective over-simplifies the more complex realities that drive both economic and security politics in Asia. The problem, he asserts, is squaring 'regionalism' where states decide at the top which elements of their national autonomy can be amalgamated from 'regionalisation' which is comprised of 'societally driven processes' (markets, interest group movements and so on) generated from below to derive explanatory power. Indeed, many such processes contain both top-down and bottom-up elements. See Pempel ([2005](#): 13, 19–28).

⁵ 'Asia-Pacific', of course, is a contested term (see Pempel [2005](#): 24–8). The problem of overcoming ambiguities in striking a definition for the

region is discussed by Kang ([2003a](#): 60). For purposes of this study, three distinct ‘subregions’ and one overlapping geographic sector that includes part of the ‘broader Pacific’ and the eastern part of Russia are included for reasons of both demarcation and conceptualisation. The three subregions are Northeast Asia (China, Japan and the Korean peninsula along with those parts of Russia contiguous to this particular sector); Southeast Asia (including the ten ASEAN member states); and South Asia (including India, Pakistan, the other members of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation and those parts of what is commonly known as ‘Central Asia’ that impact upon the dynamics of both Russian, Chinese and South Asian geopolitics, and what could be termed as the ‘broader Pacific zone’ that include maritime powers such as the US, Australia and New Zealand who adopt highly active economic, diplomatic and strategic postures towards the region). I prefer ‘Asia-Pacific’ as the fundamental geographic descriptor because, as will be argued below, American material power and ideational influences together constitute an integral maritime component of and linkage to any ‘regional–global nexus’. By contrast, Muthiah Alagappa prefers to delineate ‘Asia’ rather than ‘Asia-Pacific’ as the most analytically pertinent regional nomenclature based on China providing a common linkage for interdependence between various subregions. ‘Extra-regional actors’ such as the US, he concludes, are not the ‘primary drivers’ of tensions, conflicts and cooperative initiatives. Yet he acknowledges that Asia, as a distinct region in its own right, is open to external influences and is becoming increasingly integrated into ‘global systems’. See Alagappa ([2006](#)).

⁶ As noted by Alagappa in a roundtable organised in Taiwan to discuss his second book. The book, he noted, ‘was not designed to advance a general theory of international politics...Instead, taking a problem-oriented approach, we sought explanations from the insights of competing theories’ (Alagappa [2005](#): 262).

⁷ The US balancing role in the region is developed by Layne ([1997](#)).

⁸ This perspective is developed by Sugita ([2005](#)).

⁹ Fairly or unfairly, the writings of Aaron Friedberg ([1993/94](#)) during the mid-1990s are most often cited as the culprit in restricting realism's ability to think outside the zero-sum box in this regard.

¹⁰ Previous studies covered selective dimensions of the regional–global security interrelationship (see especially Lake and Morgan [1997a](#)). The Lake and Morgan study focuses on ‘externalities’ or ‘transborder spillovers’ to characterise a regional security system's strategic interactions but underplays the role of external (global) forces such as US global power in shaping and influencing the nature and intensity of such externalities. It thus artificially ‘conflates’ or blends the regional and global dimensions rather than focusing on how the two different levels may shape and influence each other (see Buzan and Wæver [2003](#): 27; Miller [1998](#)).

¹¹ Buzan and Wæver ([2003](#): 169–70) admit that ‘(a)ssessing the weight of the global level in the East Asian RSC [regional security complex] is not as straightforward as might first appear’ because the US could elect to either decrease its involvement in the absence of a Soviet threat, increase it in response to a China growing strong or default its predominance to China in favour of becoming an offshore balancer. The latter scenario appeared more likely in 2006–7 and the US remains enmeshed in a highly volatile Middle East and thus may be more prone to ‘live with’ a relatively stable East Asia even if it is increasingly managed by Chinese or a combination of Chinese and ASEAN policy-makers (see Goh [2005b](#)).

¹² The ‘security communities literature’ has experienced a recent ‘comeback’ within the international relations literature in the form of examining regional identity-building as a foundation for realising such communities. See Adler and Barnett ([1998](#)) and Peou ([2001](#)).

¹³ An official American appeal for China to assume the role of ‘responsible stakeholder’ for an Asian component in a world order preferred by Washington was extended in a widely cited September 2005 address delivered by then Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick (US Department of State [2005](#)). China initially responded favourably to Zoellick's analysis as an American gesture to treat China as an ‘equal’ within the international system while still acknowledging America's superpower status within that order (*People's Daily* [2006](#); Jianwei Wang [2006](#)).

¹⁴ The classic treatise on this question remains Acharya ([2001](#)).

¹⁵ A major project on nuclear weapons and security in 21st century Asia has been undertaken under the leadership of Alagappa and the East-West Center, Washington, DC. See Alagappa ([2008](#)).

Part I

2 Grappling with an elusive concept

Brian L. Job

The term ‘Asian century’ has become a shorthand expression to conjure the rise of Asia in absolute and also, but more subtly, in dynamic and relative terms (see Abramowitz and Bosworth [2006](#); Sachs [2004](#)). Not only are Asian states seen as increasingly important actors in international relations, but Asia is viewed as the regional theatre in which many of today's critical security dilemmas are being played out. Thus, to invoke a second, oft-repeated phrase: the global ‘centre of gravity’ is seen as shifting towards Asia. Just how far, how fast and how consequential any such shifting may be is a central question of this volume. Stated more specifically, it is concerned with how Asian security politics affects international systemic structures and events, and vice versa. This process is, in turn, driven by both material and non-material factors that will be decisive in shaping what type of world will emerge over the next few decades.

This volume has set itself the challenge of capturing the essence of the ‘global–regional nexus’. William T. Tow has set the stage in [chapter 1](#) by embracing Muthiah Alagappa's vision of this term: ‘a concept that captures the mutuality of interaction between actors and processes at the two levels’ (Alagappa [2006](#)). This chapter concentrates on the conceptual and theoretical features of Asian state relationships rather than on their more descriptive aspects. In doing so, it suggests that the ‘centre of gravity’ metaphor can serve as a useful heuristic tool, provided that it is applied in its dynamic, as opposed to its traditional, static sense of meaning. The key arguments of this chapter may be briefly summarised along the following lines.

The chapter begins by accepting, along with the other authors of the volume, that the Asia-Pacific is now an integral and defining component of international security politics. How the key states within the Asia-Pacific region interrelate to each other and within the international system has become more central over the last two decades in shaping the character and functioning of the system as a whole. What occurs within the Asian regional context today thus resonates in the systemic context and alters its basic features and functioning in ways that it did not prior to the benchmarks of the Cold War, the Asian financial crisis, and the events and aftermath of 11 September 2001. Insofar as the ‘centre of gravity’ is seen to refer to the

location of the greatest weight or influence within a system, the ‘global centre of gravity’ of the international security system can be seen as now residing with Asia.

As reviewed in [chapter 1](#), for regional security experts looking to explain these changes, the question has generally been viewed as exploring how the Asian region ‘fits’ into the international systemic context – an exercise analogous to how the Asian ‘regional piece’, albeit an enlarging piece in an elastic puzzle, can or cannot be accommodated within the international systemic ‘jigsaw puzzle’ whose parameters are set by one or dominant powers. These analyses reflect an implicit logic of aggregation and disaggregation (a ‘whole versus parts’ parallel) and of arbitration across two hierarchically tiered levels of analysis (the systemic and the regional).

However, as expanded upon below, prominent regionalist perspectives do not adequately articulate or explain the notion of the regional–global nexus, neither in conceptual terms nor in substantive application to the Asia-Pacific. In some degree, this is because of conflation and confusion across levels of analyses; in effect ‘regional–systemic’ often becomes conflated with or substituted for ‘regional–global’ considerations. Indeed, there are in effect four levels of analysis that must be taken into account, i.e., national/state, regional, systemic and global; and accordingly, there are nexuses across the combinations of all four levels. Focusing upon the regional–global nexus is unusual and distinctive because doing so effectively challenges (the realists’ paradigm of) implicit hierarchical chains of causality linking one level to that below or above it. To posit a regional–global nexus suggests that norms, behaviour and institutions functioning at the regional level impact and are impacted upon by forces and phenomena of global range and scope. Understanding the regional–global nexus requires encompassing both ‘top-down’ and ‘bottom-up’ approaches to how the Asian region’s member states interrelate to each other and to extra-regional actors in a global context.

This chapter’s major argument is that specification of the regional–global security nexus in a precise and static representation, in principle, is not possible. The regional–global nexus is indeterminate because of the dynamic interplay of the material and non-material forces involved and the difficulties with delineating the ‘regional’ from the ‘systemic’, from the ‘global’, and so on. One can grapple with the concept and its empirical instantiation as concerns Asia if one focuses on reconciling the levels of analysis between regional and global dynamics and if one situates their respective vectors

according to a dynamic understanding of the ‘centre of gravity’. Exploring the regional–global nexus, then, entails deciphering evolving state-centric relationships of material power and wealth, acknowledging that there is a myriad of economic and cultural forces underlying security linkages between Asia and the world, explaining attendant and highly nuanced forms of institutionalisation in the Asian region, and appreciating the impact of the evolution of identities and norms in the interplay of systemic, regional and national contexts.

Undertaking this encompassing mission fully is beyond the scope of this chapter and this particular volume. The intention here is more modest – to point out the spectrum of material and non-material forces that impinge upon the Asian regional–global security nexus, rather than to offer a causal explanation of its operation.

The ‘global’ and the ‘regional’: reconciling the levels of analysis problem

Addressing the global–regional nexus confronts the classic puzzle of how to apply different levels of operationalisation or abstraction in our effort to understand complex problems of international relations. This has traditionally been seen as the ‘levels of analysis’ problem (Singer [1961](#)). Various typologies of levels of analysis categories have been advanced – the individual, the state and the international system, as set out in Kenneth Waltz's [1959](#) classic *Man, the State, and War*, being the most common. Various economists have argued that ‘class’ must also be included as a category, while critical theorists are no less adamant that ‘text’ is integral to the problem (Campbell [1998](#); Wallerstein [1984](#)). For the purposes of this chapter and volume, however, it is the regional, systemic and global levels that are at stake, with the first receiving the most attention. In this regard, this chapter's next section takes up the regionalist perspective of Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver ([2003](#)) which, as noted in [chapter 1](#), provides the most ambitious and complete consideration of regional–systemic relationships in recent years. It will then employ selected features of their ‘regionalist perspective’ along with this author's own ideas of the regional dynamic to provide a theoretical framework within which to explore the problem of nexus of most concern to this study.

The regionalist perspective and its taxonomy

How regions have increasingly emerged in the post-Cold War era to become

the most critical elements of international security politics has been cast by international relations scholars within realist/neo-realist theoretical frameworks and thus preoccupied with consideration of material, structural factors. At the regional level of analysis, the world is seen as divisible into territorially defined regional security complexes (RSCs). 'Above' them, at the systemic level, the distribution of power among a select few global powers determines the overall structural character of the international order, with these global powers, through processes of penetration and securitisation, influencing the security agendas of states within the RSCs. Categorising states as global or regional powers, unravelling the myriad of relationships involved between levels, and assessing the changing weights and loci of influence of different actors is a complex and difficult exercise, particularly when grappling with Asia. Much sophisticated and nuanced scholarship has been accumulated in this vein over the last several years (Buzan and Wæver [2003](#); Ikenberry and Mastanduno [2003b](#); Katzenstein [2005](#); Suh, Katzenstein and Carlson [2004](#)). The work of Buzan and Wæver, however, is viewed by most scholars as a benchmark. A brief review of their key arguments is therefore warranted.

Buzan's and Wæver's 'regionalist' perspective – one that they see as distinct from neo-realist and globalist alternatives – proceeds from a complex categorisation schema of three dimensions. First, in geographic terms, the world may be divided into RSCs, defined by 'durable patterns of amity and enmity taking the form of subglobal, geographically coherent patterns of security interdependence' (Buzan and Wæver [2003](#): 45). RSCs are mutually exclusive; states do not exist in two RSCs nor, in principle, are they to overlap from one to another. Second, security relations are analysed in terms of levels of analysis, the two primary levels being the systemic and the regional with a third, national, level. Buzan and Wæver posit that 'the key to [their] approach is *keeping the security dynamics at the global level analytically distinct from those at the regional level*' (Buzan and Wæver [2003](#): 14, emphasis added). Third, states are categorised according to their capacities to project power, to dominate RSCs from within, to 'penetrate' RSCs as external actors, and to dictate the securitisation agendas at global and regional levels. Thus, Buzan and Wæver see four types of states:

- *Superpowers* are those that can 'project force around the globe, and...can intervene in any regional security complex whenever it suits their interests'. Superpowers

exercise broad spectrum capabilities, and are 'fountainheads of "universal" values'. Their legitimacy depends on establishing the legitimacy of such values (Buzan and Wæver [2003](#): 33, 35).

- *Great powers* are those responded to by others on the basis of system level calculations about the present and near-future distribution of power and ones that are treated by other major powers as if they have the potential to bid for superpower status.
- *Regional powers* are those whose capabilities help define the polarity of their RSCs, but whose influence does not extend much beyond.
- *Inter-regional states* are those that are lumped together in an essentially undefined and undifferentiated category, but are still members of RSCs (Buzan and Wæver [2003](#): 34).

A superpower dominates at the systemic level, seeking to impose its security agenda (including its ideological beliefs and normative standards) across all RSCs. Its success varies to the extent that it can penetrate and influence regional affairs, operating in collaboration or opposition to the global or regional powers resident within any region. Great powers, while operating to affect the structural character of the system as a whole, derive their capacities from their regional bases. It is the interaction of the 'global powers', i.e., the combination of great powers and superpowers, that determines the polarity of the system.

Buzan and Wæver thus posit '*a three-tiered scheme*: superpowers and great powers at the system level, and regional powers at the regional level' (Buzan and Wæver [2003](#): 34, emphasis in original). At the regional level, security conditions may be determined by one or more regional powers within their geographic domains. Such 'standard' RSCs are relatively uncomplicated. 'Centred' RSCs, on the other hand, are those shaped by a single great power, by a superpower, or in rare circumstances by a regional institution (as in Europe). The overall condition of an RSC varies along a continuum from conflict formation, to security regime, and to security community. For Buzan and Wæver it is the 'line between [the superpowers and the great powers] and regional powers' that 'defines the difference between global and regional security dynamics' (Buzan and Wæver [2003](#):

34). In their theoretical framework, the global–regional security nexus is this hypothetical location on the cusp between regional and global security affairs – a location at the intersection of what they insist are analytically distinct regional and global levels of analysis.

However, as Buzan and Wæver apparently realise, their categorisation schema is not sufficiently complex to account for contemporary circumstances. Nor is it possible to sustain analytical distinction between levels of analysis. To compensate, they introduce a series of hybrid levels and RSC types, including ‘great power regional security complexes’ – those whose dynamics directly affect balance calculations at the global level and have spill-over effects into other regions – and ‘supercomplexes’ that are prototypes of global and regional levels. In turn, this necessitates a fourth level of analysis – the *inter-regional*. The effect of these and associated elaborations is effectively to blur the analytical distinction between the systemic, regional and global to create zones where the three levels of analysis overlap and merge. As a result, the notions of regional–systemic, regional–global and systemic–global nexuses become both confused and confusing. At this stage, Buzan and Wæver’s regionalist theory tends to lose its theoretical, explanatory capacities and becomes instead a complex typologising project to account for all possible empirical possibilities (Gleditsch [2005](#)).

Asia seen as a regional supercomplex

Attempting to come to terms with the evolution of the Asia-Pacific brings to light these dilemmas and limitations. For Buzan and Wæver, three transitions have occurred since the end of the Cold War. First, the RSCs of Northeast and Southeast Asia have become fused into the East Asian regional supercomplex centred upon China. Second, inter-regional dynamics between East Asia and South Asia have increasing impact. As India (dominant within the unipolar South Asian RSC) gains prominence as an ‘all-Asian regional power’, the Asian supercomplex is verging on tripolarity (Buzan [2003](#): 163). Third, the role of the United States, not a member in the Asian region, but rather as the external, global superpower, is changing from that of protector to offshore balancer (Buzan [2003](#): 163).

What then becomes particularly difficult is specification of the system level and the sustaining of a distinction between the regional and the systemic. Two Asian RSC states clearly qualify as great powers operating at

the systemic level (China and Japan); India and Russia as global powers are significantly engaged with Asia at the interrelationship level. The US, seeking to advance its own interests as the sole global superpower, penetrates and shapes the Asian regional security structure (largely through its hub and spokes alliances) and securitises regional affairs according to its priorities (for example, the war on terror). Buzan and Wæver thus characterise the global system as a 1+4 power configuration (the US + China, Japan, Russia and Europe). But, this is a system in flux, one that increasingly reflects the rise of China and the centrality of US–China relations for shaping its future.

Where, then, can one locate the regional–global nexus in this picture? It is apparent from the above that there is no precise delineation possible between the regional and global levels of analysis. Buzan and Wæver admit that in the case of Asia all four levels – domestic, regional, super-regional and global – ‘are in play at the same time’. ‘China and Japan cannot disentangle their regional and superregional roles from their global ones’ (Buzan and Wæver [2003](#): 61). For the US, as the Asian supercomplex becomes increasingly continentally Sino-centred, the relevance of its maritime power project capacities becomes problematic. This leads Buzan to conclude that the ‘whole pattern looks mainly dependent on internal developments within China and the US’. The basic dynamics of inter-state relations remain uncertain, and the best one can hope for in terms of a conceptual demarcation is the evolution of a ‘rather odd and weak sort of security regime’ (Buzan [2003](#): 143). In effect, the regional–global balance has devolved to become heavily dependent on what transpires at the *national* level of analysis.

It is important not to read the above as decrying the overall merits of Buzan's and Wæver's work. These remain significant, both in terms of conceptual development of regions and regional security relations, and in terms of the historical sweep of their regional narratives. However, for our purposes, their work demonstrates the limitations of neo-realist theoretical approaches to gaining a purchase on regional–systemic dynamics. Buzan and Wæver offer their regionalist perspective as an alternative to neo-realism, one that is to correct its systemic preoccupation by revealing the relevance of the regional level of analysis. Despite this reorientation of focus, security dynamics, regardless of their level, are still seen as operating according to realist precepts. That is, they remain state-centric, top-down, i.e., hierarchically defined, black-boxed and materially determined. Only the great powers are regarded as relevant players. Non-material and ideational factors

are mentioned; regional security complexes are defined as ‘socially constructed’ (Buzan and Wæver [2003](#): 48). But, as the argument proceeds and particularly as one moves towards a substantive consideration of Asia, these factors recede from view, at best seen as residual and relevant only to what cannot be accounted for by realism.

As far as pinpointing the regional–global security nexus, by cataloguing the range of interactions that take place across multiple levels of analysis, the existence and relevance of such a nexus is certified. That the regional–global nexus is dynamic is apparent from observing the extent and rapidity of change from one time point to the next, especially as these equate to moments of structural change resulting in shifts in regional and systemic polarity. But this is equivalent to a series of monochromatic pictures, when what one is looking for is a colour movie and an explanation of its plot. As typically criticised, the application of neo-realist-based theorising does not take into account ideational and normative understandings that motivate actors’ behaviour nor does it produce explanations of change and the dynamics that produced it. While the regionalist perspective can establish in descriptive terms the actors and forces that operate across regional–systemic levels, i.e., in effect to ‘locate’ the regional–systemic nexus, a more complete calibration of this nexus, in effect the specification of the causal weights and connections of forces involved, has proven to be beyond the capacities of these regionalist/neo-realist frames. Tackling the more complex regional–global nexus requires an even broader and a dynamic frame of reference.

Invoking a dynamic ‘centre of gravity’ perspective on the global–regional nexus

Regions and regionalism

A first task is to elaborate an understanding of our primary referent, i.e., ‘the region’. Geographic proximity, the essential aspect of all definitions, is not by itself sufficient. A region is a collection of actors that achieves cohesion (and creates an identity, however minimally shared) through their interrelationships. More is involved, however, than transactional density. T. J. Pempel captures this by observing that ‘the term *region* carries a meaning that is not only geographic but also geopsychological... Regions...are fluid and complex mixtures of physical, psychological, and behavioral traits that are continually in the process of being recreated and redefined’ (Pempel

[2005](#): 3–4, emphasis in original). One only has to recall the political transformations occurring in Europe prior to and even following the Treaties of Westphalia to verify the accuracy of this observation. One can likewise point to Asia's immediate post-decolonisation period of the 1950s and 1960s to understand how, after several false starts attributable to contested national identities, institutionalisation evolved as a compromise among sovereign powers rather than as a true process of integration (Acharya [2003](#)). As Andrew Hurrell ([2007](#): 130) emphasises, 'dynamic regions are inherently unstable with little possibility of freezing the status quo'.

A region, therefore, is socially constructed. Its ideational components – the identities that member states of a region adopt and the norms governing their interaction and institutions – must be taken into account. 'Regionalism' is the blanket term employed to describe the nature of, and the extent to which, member states and/or other key actors share commonality of norms, identities, interests and collective action. Regionalism is multidimensional, its connotation varying according to the lens adopted by the scholar or policy-maker assessing it, with most centred upon the density and patterns of social, political or economic interaction. But these tend to miss the critical ideational aspects of regionalism ('cognitive realism') that focus upon the extent of collective awareness and the waxing and waning of a common regional identity (Hurrell [2007](#): 130). Indeed, within contemporary scholarship on Asia, key debates are focused upon the existence, content and consequence of a developing Asian identity. These range from controversies over claims of distinctive, if not superior, 'Asian values' (for example, Mahbubani [2008](#)), to whether the momentum of 'East Asian regionalism', reflecting a 'pan-Asian' identity, has overtaken the pan-Pacific institutionalisation agenda, and associated project of Asia-Pacific regional identity-building, of the 1990s (Evans [2005](#)).

Appreciating the nature of regionalism, particularly in this latter sense, is critical to an understanding of a regional–global nexus. Regionalism represents a constellation of regional members' interests, capacities and identities as they are realised within the regional context and expressed in juxtaposition to global and other regional forces. 'All regionalist arrangements have to be understood in relation to systemic or "outside in" factors and the inherent tensions that are involved' (Hurrell [2007](#): 130). Regionalism is largely envisaged as a top-down phenomenon, especially so concerning Asia with its tradition of external penetration, authoritarian

governments and centralised economies. For recent analysts, such as Frost (2008: 15), 'regionalism suggests a conscious set of related ideas', is 'essentially political', and 'is planned and executed for reasons of state'. Its central agents, therefore, are government officials, policy experts, and academics and think-tank representatives engaged in official and unofficial network and dialogue processes devoted to the advancement of cooperative security and regional economic integration (see, for instance, Job 2003).

However, for Asia as in other post-Cold War regional contexts, bottom-up processes must not be ignored. The rising aspirations for more representative political systems, the strengthening of informal marketing networks and the greater role of transnational actors are becoming powerful forces in changing national political cultures and security agendas and, in turn, shaping the interface between the regional and global. These are driven and accelerated by technological revolutions in communication and information dissemination, the delivery of goods and services, the diffusion of popular culture, and the aspirations of civilian populations for prosperity and for meaningfully representative systems of governance. Analysts have adopted the term 'regionalisation' to distinguish these bottom-up dynamics from those of 'regionalism' (Frost 2008; Pempel 2005). The agents of regionalisation are private individuals, multinational corporations and civil-society organisations, but also less benign actors such as transnational criminal networks. Regionalisation, therefore, is both a manifestation and a driver of globalisation.

The 'systemic' versus the 'global'

As noted earlier, the 'systemic' and the 'global' are not the same, even though these terms are frequently used interchangeably. 'Systemic' refers to the structuring of the international state system and its resultant polarity. The systemic level, therefore, is largely occupied with the interaction among (Buzan and Wæver's) great powers across political, security, economic and social dimensions, i.e., the international state system.

'Global' is a phrase with a variety of broader connotations and implications. It is employed as a holistic term encompassing humanity's physical and social environment and the economic, political and social forces that effect change with global consequence. Global norms and global concerns are seen as distinct from those represented through the international state system (Elliott 2007). Globalisation, as a theoretical perspective, looks

to the erosion of states – their sovereignty being undermined by the forces of market capitalism and the influence of transnational actors (Held *et al.* [1999](#)). Global security and global security threats can be distinguished in similar fashion from international security and international security threats – global security threats being those that cannot be directly territorialised (for example, global warming, the spread of disease), or operate with little constraint of distance (for example, terrorist or transnational criminal networks). As has become increasingly apparent in the last decade, certainly concerning Asia, these global security concerns are being addressed at state, regional or systemic levels.

Thus the terms ‘regional–global nexus’ and ‘regional–systemic nexus’ are not interchangeable. The latter is cast within the context of the international state system: the ‘mutuality of interaction’ of concern, that of states operating across regional and systemic levels of analysis. The former, however, is more expansive and more difficult to embrace analytically, engaging more amorphous notions of global environmental forces and regional and global ‘identities’ and ‘norms’. This distinction has become particularly important in a post-11 September world. Threats normally associated with state-centric grounded politics such as rising military capabilities or economic mercantilism are still present. But the cataclysmic potential of ‘global’ threats such as unbridled ethnic conflicts, intensified global warming or the looming prospects of universal pandemics all act to undermine any sense of ‘global commons’ and erode the ideational glue at that level of analysis that normally buttresses regional identity and unity. International systemic institutions, such as the World Trade Organization and the United Nations, have fallen victim to the sovereignty-protectionist priorities of their memberships, consequently failing to mobilise capabilities and suffering from eroding legitimacy. In analytical terms, this reflects the conditions and characteristics of the ‘systemic–global nexus’, leaving open the question of whether or not with regional–global interaction, i.e., at the regional–global nexus, one finds greater analytical or empirical traction concerning threats to global security.

The impact of a global hegemonic power on the global–regional nexus

Only brief words about another ‘top-down’ perspective applicable to the regional–global nexus – the role of a global hegemonic power – are warranted here, given the attention to this topic by others in this volume (see [chapters 4](#), [5](#) and [6](#)). Nearly twenty years after the end of the Cold War,

treatments of systemic-level and regional-systemic security concerns remain centred upon debates over the role and influence of the US. While much has transpired during these years, the US remains for the foreseeable future the only state holding superpower status and thus the ability to alter the security configuration of any and all regions (Mauzy and Job [2007](#)). Its behaviour thus remains central to understanding the global–regional nexus.

Most scholars are in accord in regarding the US as ‘the producer of world order’ (Ikenberry [2005](#): 133) concerning the architecture of the post-Second World War regional orders in Asia and Europe. The US grand strategy in each, however, was quite different – in Europe substantial financial support for the reconstruction of a market economy and creation and engagement in multilateral security institutions; in Asia allowing market access for its indigenously developed economies and providing security guarantees through the hub-and-spokes system of bilateral alliances and defence relationships (Hemmer and Katzenstein [2002](#)). Some analysts have emphasised the Asian region as embedded in an American imperium, underpinned by its dominance of bilateral regional security institutions and its ‘special economic relationship’ with Japan (Katzenstein [2005](#)). Others have assigned greater significance to the regional receptivity of American penetration and securitisation in the Asian region, especially as the events of current decades have unfolded (Goh [2005b](#)). But US management of the regional order has not been complete. Operating as an external, status quo power, US exercise of hegemonic power has been limited (Mastanduno [2003](#); also see Mastanduno in Alagappa [2006](#): 27). While able to deter and thus prevent war, it has not sought actively to resolve Asia's long-standing security crises. More importantly, nor has the US gained full acceptance of the legitimacy of its ideational/normative hegemonic agenda (for example, the promotion of democracy).

These works on hegemonic strategy adopt a top-down approach and as such, in focusing on the US role in Asia, inform the systemic–regional security nexus from this perspective. Accordingly, they have been critiqued as ignoring the relevance of indigenous regional processes and events that ran parallel, if not counter, to the US agenda. This is particularly true for analysts of Southeast Asian security politics. Amitav Acharya, for example, argues that the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) members are wary of balancing strategies directed against China, because adopting them would mean an excessive dependence on US power and reliability as a security

guarantor to make them credible. Moreover, the adoption of such a strategy would be a potential liability to Southeast Asian elites attempting to cultivate greater standing with their own domestic polities (Acharya [2003/04](#): 152–3). Without a more fundamental and comprehensive explanation of how ‘bottom-up’ policy calculations and dynamics build in restraints to US influence and power in the region, hegemonic theory glosses over an integral part of the ‘centre of gravity’ dynamic cited at this chapter's outset: how regionally indigenous socio-political and economic dynamics constrain or alter superpower/great power prerogatives shaping the regional–global nexus.

To summarise the framework of this chapter's discussion as it has evolved to this point, the Buzan/Wæver ‘regionalist perspective’ taxonomy is useful in identifying the different characteristics of security actors that collectively form a regional security complex and in weighing various parameters or levels beyond which these actors may or may not be influential. But it fails to capture the ideational and physical phenomena that are central in shaping the dynamics of intra-regional behaviour and that spills over across regional and global levels. This is partly because the notions of region, regionalism and regionalisation are dynamic and involve a blending of top-down and bottom-up interaction between actors across levels of analysis. Contrary to the regionalist's perspective, levels of analysis cannot be kept conceptually distinct. It is the merging of forces across levels – the diffusion of levels of analysis – that must be taken into account. Thus, for instance, assuming that a current (and declining) global hegemon – the US – can achieve such adjudication on the basis of sheer material capacities alone or in combination with what its own elites and populace regard to be a superior package of ideational equipment is, at best, insufficient for understanding and working with those processes related to nexus management and, at worse, is highly precarious in regard to inviting conceptual misunderstanding and policy miscalculation. An approach which focuses more on how actors and processes interact mutually across levels of analysis is necessary.

The ‘centre of gravity’: two distinctive perspectives on the global–regional nexus

The term ‘centre of gravity’ has two strands of meaning. In a less technical sense, it refers to the ‘point or object of greatest influence or importance’. It is with this connotation that one queries whether the global ‘centre of gravity’ has shifted from the systemic towards the regional and towards the Asia-Pacific region as opposed to others. Is there some overall aggregation of

economic, military/political and cultural terms which is responsible for ‘Asia rising’ relative to other regions? If so, does this development relate directly and meaningfully to the corollary trends of the United States’ hegemonic or superpower role diminishing or increasing or of the rising power and role being assumed by China? At issue, as others in this volume detail, are not only matters of accumulation of wealth that can be translated directly or indirectly into military capacities (see [chapter 10](#)), but also issues concerning the ‘soft power’ of diplomacy and engagement in bilateral and multilateral institutions (see [chapter 3](#)) and concerning the translation of contending normative principles and ideational traditions of order, continuity and community into regional and global identities (see [chapters 7](#) and [8](#) in this volume).

In its second, more technical context, the centre of gravity assumes more dynamic and indeterminate qualities, its referent being a body or bodies within an environment subject to various gravitational forces. As these forces shift, so does the centre of gravity – the hypothetical point at which the various forces converge or are ‘centred’ (*Random House Webster's Unabridged Dictionary* [2006](#)). It is this connotation of centre of gravity that is analogous to Alagappa's notion of Asia's global–regional security nexus as a concept that captures the ‘mutuality of interaction’ among actors and processes across levels. The regional–global nexus in this sense is a conceptual point of tension on which multidimensional regional and global forces are focused. It is a dynamic equilibrium point that may be more or less stable at any given point in time. The analyst does not utilise this notion of the centre of gravity to regard the global–regional nexus as something that can be described and ‘weighed’. Rather it provides a tool to conceptualise the coming together of ‘push and pull factors’, mutual reinforcement/attraction or resistance/repulsion of regional and global forces as these apply to Asia and Asian security.

Following the arguments above, a multidimensional perspective becomes essential. The identity and roles of the powers with impact on the systemic level of state-centric interaction must certainly be taken into account as an integral component of international security relations. This includes their strategic capabilities, the trajectories of their economies and their ideational and normative agendas. In turn, the systematic level of such interaction is affected, at times dramatically, by global phenomena that originate ‘outside’ the system, although the process of their inception may coexist with it. One

may only need to recall how the December 2004 tsunami that devastated large parts of South Asian and Southeast Asian countries overwhelmed initial national efforts to respond, and generated unique systemic responses by regional and extra-regional actors. The 2003 SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome) crisis and more recent intermittent outbreaks of bird flu, the participation of regional and extra-regional powers in the Six Party Talks on North Korean nuclear proliferation, and the 2007 Bali conference on global warming all exemplify further intersections of global and systemic security politics that have transpired in 'Asian' regional settings.

Examined from the regional level, such episodes demonstrate the expanding 'material weight' of Asia in the global context (see Tellis and Wills [2006](#)). Given the portion of the world's wealth, population and productivity now concentrated in Asia, the stakes for 'things going wrong there' relative to overall international stability are immensely high. The international system and the forces of globalisation that are increasingly shaping it are directly linked to the relative momentum of East Asian regionalism and regionalisation. The drivers underlying and shaping this momentum reflect (a) both top-down and bottom-up processes of regionalism and regionalisation; (b) tensions between the 'Asian' regional norms of non-interference in internal affairs or unmitigated respect for sovereign prerogatives and 'Western' norms of humanitarian intervention, the responsibility to protect ('human security'), the promotion of democracy, and universalist approaches to counter-terrorism; and (c) the rise of regional great powers such as China and India (and perhaps a 'more normalised' Japan) in enhanced regional roles.

In the first sense of the 'centre of gravity' concept cited above (the shift of the systemic towards the regional), there is little argument that material power is shifting towards Asia and that 'the action' in today's world is increasingly focused on that region (Cohen [2006](#); Rapkin and Thompson [2006](#); Tellis [2006b](#)). However, an assessment of the rise of Asian identity supporting a set of norms in contradistinction to those of the West is more controversial (see Mahbubani [2008](#)). While the demise of the George W. Bush administration's agenda of neo-conservative democracy promotion, coupled with the demonstrable failure of its mission in Iraq and the erosion of its moral credibility in light of its own human rights violations, may see diminution of US influence *per se* in this regard, critical and divisive tensions between Asian and 'Western' societies concerning the rights and roles of

citizens and the role of religion and religious precepts in governance remain unresolved and volatile. Central to Asian security, prosperity and order will be how domestic political trends in key Asian polities play out over time in regard to greater liberalisation or a reaffirmation of authoritarianism.

It is the second notion of the 'centre of gravity' metaphor which is concerned with reconciling the dynamic sense of a global–regional nexus and tensions between regional and systemic forces that provides a more interesting conceptual challenge. For this a more nuanced consideration of the tensions within the Asian context is required in order to link the regional dynamic to rapidly changing global trends and challenges. Thus, to conclude and to set the stage for the issues and arguments raised by authors of subsequent chapters, two examples of the nature and complexity of the Asian regional–global nexus will be highlighted.

The first concerns Asian economic growth. Its positive consequences for the economic well-being of Asian societies taken in aggregate terms cannot be disputed. Nor can the fact of China's rise as a global and regional economic power be disputed, having accumulated the world's largest foreign reserves, become the number one trading partner of all Asian states, and having appeared to have escaped at least the short-term fallout from the current US economic decline. But, when assessed in terms of the impact on the Asian regional–global nexus, the potential positive impacts of Asian economic growth must be qualified when considered against (a) the national-level dynamic of increased social and political strains arising from disparities in the distribution of wealth within Asian societies; (b) the inter-regional dynamics of East Asian energy dependence on the Middle East and Central Asia; (c) the interdependence between the US and Asian economies (Cohen [2006](#)); and (d) the deleterious impact of unrestrained economic growth on the global environment.

The trajectory and stability of Asian economic interdependence at regional and inter-regional levels can be encompassed by one short phrase: 'continued Chinese economic growth'. Any other outcome posits the threat for a worldwide recession at a time when the American economy appears to be increasingly fragile and weighted down for years to come with the legacy of foreign wars and monumental defence spending. These dilemmas are heightened by the failure to have developed and sustained robust economic institutions at the regional and systemic levels. Negotiations to regulate global trade have floundered with the collapse of the Doha Round. Open

economic regionalism in Asia has run its course, rendering the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) largely irrelevant. Regional Asian economic institutions, nurtured in the aftermath of the 1997 financial crisis, such as the Chiang Mai Initiative, are in a fledgling state.

The second important source of tension concerns the intensification of ideological faultlines – not only faultlines at the regional–global nexus but also growing faultlines within the societies and among the states of Asia. The tensions across regional–global levels have been extensively described and debated elsewhere and do not require rehearsal (see Mahbubani [2001](#); Zakaria [1994](#)). They have been exacerbated by the rhetoric on both sides in the ‘war on terror’, but perhaps more critically by the prosecution of that ‘war’ which has exposed the failures of the key defenders of universal values of political freedom and human rights. These impacts will linger for decades, complicating the ‘mutuality of interaction’ in global–regional interrelations and affecting the prospects for the positive functioning of systemic institutions. Thus, the reinforced insistence on the inviolability of sovereignty by Asian states (in tandem with African and East European counterparts), despite the failures of state regimes to protect or provide for their populations, threatens to paralyse the United Nations and relegate the Security Council to its Cold War stasis.

The tension between institutionalisation on a ‘pan-Asian’ versus ‘pan-Pacific’ basis likewise represents a combination of inter-regional and global–regional dynamics. Established regional security (the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF)) and economic institutions (APEC) have lost momentum. Yet the extent to which the viability of specific institutional typologies indicate a long-term trend in order-building is hardly certain, with the ARF and the even more tentative East Asia Community arguably representing pan-Asian models for security management while APEC remains more pan-Pacific in its composition and aspirations. Certain bilateral and ad hoc strategies are advancing, particularly in the areas of free trade and bargaining on arms control questions. The relevance of the US regional bilateral security network is coming under increasing scrutiny as counter-terrorism seems to be better instituted through ‘coalitions of the willing’ rather than formal treaty alliances. With impermanence comes uncertainty in relation to the global–regional nexus.

However, it is the signs of emerging faultlines among Asian states that also deserve critical attention. Thus, among Southeast Asian states, where

maintenance of a consensus on the protection of sovereignty and non-interference in the domestic affairs of regional members has been a central tenet of regionalism, one has begun to see indirect and direct challenging of accepted norms and practices. States such as Myanmar can no longer escape at least the rhetorical criticism of regional neighbours. ASEAN vision statements increasingly advance aspirations to Western, globalist norms of democracy and principles of human security rather than traditional Asian pronouncements that accentuate pragmatism and the national interest over universalism. To what extent this represents any longer-term trend towards social liberalisation at national levels and regional levels is unclear. Indeed, the ASEAN Charter as adopted in late 2007 appears to signal a reinforcement of traditional ASEAN state-centric, sovereignty protectionist norms.

Indeed, rather than seeing reform arise through this top-down, regime-driven agenda of regionalism, it is more likely to emerge from the intensified, bottom-up pressure of forces of regionalisation. It is the growing faultline within Asian societies that may provide not only change but potentially, if continually thwarted by recalcitrant regimes, societal upheaval that will resonate at regional and global levels. Asian political leaders will continue to meet intensified bottom-up pressures to recognise and legitimise middle-class aspirations in an increasing number of Asian societies, and to acknowledge a greater determination to modify the social alienation of minority ethnic groups within those societies. While Myanmar, China, North Korea and perhaps Thailand continue as exceptions to the rule, the democratisation of many other Asian states attests to a ‘spill-over’ effect now transforming Asian institutions in ways its participants could not have anticipated a few years ago. Tracing what specific forces of globalisation (internet communications, greater ease of travel and the permeation of action groups across boundaries) are linked to these changes represents the ‘regional–global nexus’ at work.

Conclusion

It is tempting to apply the newest or most popular theoretical line as a convenient rationalisation for how international relations works in a specific geographic region or to explain the various and dynamic relationships between that region and the broader world. As seen in [chapter 1](#) and in this chapter, powerful arguments have been advanced by realists, institutionalists

and constructivists for their conceptual preferences to be accepted as legitimate explanations of structural and ideational change. Some analysts have recommended focusing on what they see as the ‘right mix’ of these combined approaches to enrich our understanding of such change. But as noted in [chapter 1](#), analytical eclecticism is as problematic as its simpler theoretical counterparts in yielding a practicable basis for understanding the nexus of critical regional and global security forces that operate across an increasingly dense geographic and ideational continuum. Integrating structural, normative and ideational factors to derive an adequately heuristic explanation of how such forces unfold remains an elusive and frustrating intellectual enterprise.

Concentrating on reconciling the classical levels of analysis question with the type of centre of gravity framework developed here offers at least some promise for understanding how the most critical regional and global elements interrelate and how such a linkage will affect international security politics. The chapters that follow are designed to unpack various elements of the regional–global nexus, combining their diverse perspectives in the hope that a more articulate conception might ultimately be achieved.

3 Asia-Pacific institutions

Michael Wesley

As Asia's great powers – China, India, Japan, Russia and perhaps Iran – assert their prerogatives over the next decades, they will reshape the global order in their interactions with each other and with the United States. Whether this next evolution in the polarity of the international system can be mediated within existing institutions is a key question. Global institutions such as the United Nations (UN) helped to mediate transitions from wartime multipolarity to Cold War bipolarity and then to post-Cold War unipolarity, but at a cost of declining relevance as councils in which the great powers resolved their conflicts or found common ground on the compelling issues of the day.

The multilateral era, dating from the end of the Second World War, holds two key and countervailing lessons for thinking about the polarity mediation capacities of international institutions. Over the course of half a century of polarity transitions, it has proved extraordinarily difficult to reform the decision-making systems of major institutions to reflect power shifts. But this has not affected the endurance of these institutions, which by and large have persisted despite the declining relevance of their representational structures. The continued construction of multilateral fora, both regional and global, partly reflects calculations that it is easier to set up new bodies than to reform or scrap existing ones. But this is not a perennial solution, because as the international stage becomes increasingly cluttered with institutions, there is less and less room for new inventions.

The Asia-Pacific is less cluttered than other parts of the international stage, but it too shows signs of crowding. There are broadly three dynamics that have driven Asia-Pacific multilateralism, and at the heart of each is a particular tension between regionalism and globalism. The first dynamic is reactions to the bilateral alliances centred on the US that have formed the basic framework of the regional order since the 1950s. Institution-building in the Asia-Pacific has from time to time been motivated by collective convictions about the need to offset, complement or elaborate upon these anchors of American dominance in the region. The second dynamic arises from the periodic realisation of regional states of the limited influence they carry in global councils. The urge to play a global role commensurate with

the region's demographic and economic footprints has been a powerful, if sporadic motive towards collective action. The third dynamic is competitive regionalism. The near simultaneous rise or resurgence of four, perhaps five, regional great powers has inevitably touched off intense competition either to build or reduce others' spheres of influence. Existing and new regional institutions have become key arenas within which Asia's powers have asserted, regionally and globally, their commitments, intentions and voice rights.

My intention in this chapter is to explore the prospects for existing and new institutions to mediate the rise of Asia's great powers. I begin by examining the causes of the persistence and rigidity that affects most multilateral organisations, and the resulting process of institutional accretion. The next three sections examine the three basic dynamics of institution-building in the Asia-Pacific that continue to coexist, and are likely to be the main shapers of regionalism into the future. In the conclusion I draw together these strands to assess the prospects for Asia-Pacific institutions.

The causes of institutional sclerosis

It is not original to observe that multilateral institutions resemble archaeological digs, in that their decision-making processes and structures preserve the power relativities that existed and specific tradeoffs that were made at the time of their founding. This is not to argue that international institutions are incapable of evolution; they are able to evolve very effectively in some ways but are remarkably sclerotic in others. Most institutions are good at accepting new members, although they have a mixed rate of success in integrating these new members into the institution. Both the European Union (EU) and Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) have broadened their membership reasonably easily after the Cold War, assisted by core visions of regional comprehensiveness; yet the EU's uncertainty about admitting Turkey is closely tied to the realisation that admitting 70 million Muslims will decisively tilt Europe's balance of influence and sense of identity.

Institutions also tend to be relatively adept at acquiring new areas of responsibility, and in developing new mechanisms for coordination and information-sharing. They have great difficulty, however, in reforming structures and practices that explicitly confer relative benefits and

prerogatives to particular members. Those states that have gained relatively powerful positions at the outset tend to jealously guard their prerogatives against reform attempts that would maintain the institution's relevance to its evolving environment. This is particularly the case for powers on the wane or challenged by rising rival powers, which often rely on the structural power conferred by a privileged place in an institution to bolster their waning influence.

There are several reasons for institutional sclerosis. Proposals for institutional reform often run into a form of perceptual parochialism, in which influential states within an organisation privilege short-term relative status considerations over longer-term considerations of the institution's relevance and effectiveness. Often opponents of reform raise general considerations such as the dilution of decision-making effectiveness, or specific concerns about the suitability of certain candidates to be granted more responsibility, but it is hard to ignore their underlying interest in preserving relative status. Most proposals for reform of decision-making institutions recognise they have little prospect of persuading waning powers to relinquish their positions of influence, and therefore must rely on adding newly powerful states to decision structures. But here the institution faces the classic tradeoff between widening and deepening: the broader the decision-making group, the greater the chances of disagreement, and consequently widening often leads to a decline in institutional effectiveness and decisiveness. This is a major consideration in relation to reforming the UN Security Council, where most schemes acknowledge that the expansion of permanent membership would have to exclude the extension of the veto to new permanent members (see, for example, Evans [1993](#): 181). But aspirants such as India reject such partial recognition, and have held out for full veto-wielding status in the Security Council.

The paucity of structural reform of international institutions is matched by the extreme rarity of the disestablishment of organisations no longer thought to be relevant or effective. There are several barriers to organisational renovation. Institutions are prey to what may be called an 'effectiveness trap', whereby an organisation, by contributing to a certain positive state of affairs internationally, comes to be seen as essential to those outcomes. This gives rise to a reluctance to jeopardise those outcomes, even if they are broadly thought to be suboptimal, in the cause of risky experiments with institutional renovation. The case of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty is a case in

point: despite the deep malaise that affects that regime, there is a fear that its scrapping would lead to a rise in proliferation, even though there is no evidence that the treaty has played a decisive role in restraining proliferation for the past several decades (Wesley [2005](#)). A related cause of reluctance are beliefs that institutions are the product of specific windows of opportunity, and embody significant diplomatic sunk costs; therefore to abolish one institution without a guarantee of an improved replacement is foolhardy. Third, most institutions are formed around visions of progress and commitments to solidarity in international relations; consequently, there are high symbolic costs attached to the abandonment of such organisations. Fourth, institutions shape their members' sense of incentives and interests. The older the institution, the greater the sense of ownership felt by its member states, many of which see vital national interests tied up in its continued functioning.

As new powers arise, or as new issues prioritise different combinations of states, it is easier to set up new institutions than to reform or abandon existing ones. Often newer institutions have their origins in ad hoc summitry, and are slow to develop the full administrative substructures of the older institutions. Thus the G8 (Group of 8 – Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, UK and US), which brings together the world's largest economies plus Russia, has been regularised as an annual leaders' summit, whose broad agenda is determined by a rotating chair in consultation with the other members. This heavily Atlanticist institution¹ is mirrored in the Asia-Pacific by the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Leaders' meetings, which operate along broadly similar principles as the G8 summits. The task of servicing the proliferating array of multilateral institutions has begun to strain the capacities of most foreign policy bureaucracies, particularly those of developing countries. Each of these institutions has had a tendency to proliferate into various officials', ministers' and leaders' meetings as well as several issue-based working groups. Each of these submeetings requires extensive preparation and often follow-up work. Taken together, all of this activity soaks up diplomatic time and resources, particularly in small bureaucracies. Another effect is the increasing crowding of the diplomatic schedule, to the extent that finding coinciding dates for any extra ad hoc summitry has become extremely difficult, especially in Europe and the Asia-Pacific. Multilateral meetings have contributed to the increasing 'routinisation' of diplomacy, a development that leaves less and less latitude

for foreign policy-makers to respond to short-term diplomatic contingencies (Gyngell and Wesley [2003](#): 250–2).

New powers and old institutions

In its oldest form, multilateralism is concerned with mediating relations among great powers and achieving a commonality of outlook among them on international order (see, for example, Albrecht-Carrié [1968](#); Kissinger [1957](#)). Great power status is both achieved and conferred, combining a preponderance of attributes – territory and strategic position, population and cohesion, military might and economic size – with acknowledgement by others of a state's power and its legitimacy in acting as a great power. Great power multilateralism has always sprung from an acknowledgement that international order requires the system's most potent states to agree on a *modus vivendi* between them. To invite rising powers into great power councils is to acknowledge their status, to impress on them their joint responsibility for international order, and to integrate them into the processes and commitments of the great power concert. Regular meetings among the great powers allow the continuous mutual adjustment of expectations and the coordination of order preferences. On the other hand, exclusion from great power councils can have an alienating effect, leading rising powers to feel little responsibility for contributing to international order, and to view international outcomes as not reflecting their preferences or interests. A lack of access to great power councils can lead to low levels of trust that the international system will produce what a rising power sees as reasonable outcomes, or that the international system will forestall or correct unreasonable outcomes.

But established institutions have a poor record of according rising powers authority within existing decision structures. The inability of the UN Security Council to include new great powers as permanent members is an example. Long-established institutions also tend to develop rigidities in their functions and outlook that can focus their attention away from newer issues that arise attending the arrival of new great powers. James March and Johan Olsen suggest that institutions develop over time a specific 'access structure' which 'may require, allow or not allow a particular problem or solution, if activated, to be attached to a particular choice'; and a set 'decision structure' which 'may require, allow, or not allow a particular decision-maker to participate in

the making of a particular choice' (March and Olsen [1989](#): 28). Given that the major global institutions were constituted during an era when Western powers were dominant, it is unsurprising that most embed Western countries in dominant positions. This leads to particular attentiveness to certain types of international order issues and inattentiveness to others; it also underlines charges that are often made that the norms propagated by the major global institutions are not universal, but are culturally specific to the West. On several occasions, the US and its allies have circumvented the UN Security Council and resorted to other institutions for endorsement of collective action, further emphasising impressions of Western dominance and impatience with non-Western states' preferences and reservations.

One prominent method that has been used to address the issue of rising powers and sclerotic institutions is the development of bilateral summitry between established and rising powers. A clear indicator of rising power status is the greater attention and consideration accorded to a state by great and lesser powers alike. Established powers can use regular bilateral meetings to attempt to integrate rising powers into existing frameworks and norms of international order. The weakness of bilateral summitry, however, is that it is difficult to reconcile bilateral issues and international concerns; and often bilateral disagreements can overwhelm broader milieu perspectives. The regular summits between Chinese and American leaders during the 1990s are a case in point. Although the People's Republic of China has been a permanent member of the UN Security Council since 1971, there was a general acknowledgement that Beijing had remained uncommitted to dominant norms of global order, an anomaly that became more prominent during the post-Cold War era of heightened internationalism. Despite Washington's intent that such talks would contribute to China's 'socialisation' into global and regional norms, bilateral summits were often dominated by the discussion of bilateral disagreements and broad issues such as trade and human rights.

The difficulties of engaging rising powers either bilaterally or through established multilateral mechanisms raises the dangers of alienation from the dominant norms of global order. If not admitted to great power councils, rising powers may begin to manoeuvre outside or against established frameworks. This establishes a powerful incentive towards ad hoc summitry, and the gradual regularisation of such meetings. Often new institutions established to integrate rising powers are formed on a regional rather than a

global basis, for two reasons. First, regional innovations do not challenge the legitimacy of established global institutions. And second, as rising powers' most immediate impacts are regional, it makes sense to address issues of their rise on a regional basis. Thus the G8 has been established as a predominantly Atlanticist institution, and has focused on issues important to Atlantic states; in the Asia-Pacific, the APEC Leaders' meetings focus more closely on issues preoccupying Asia-Pacific states. Regional institutions, therefore, often arise in the context of global order issues, but they are also powerfully shaped by regional reactions to global structures.

Supplementing the San Francisco system

The regional order in the Asia-Pacific has been underpinned by a series of alliances between the US and the Philippines (August 1951), Japan (September 1951), Australia and New Zealand (September 1951), the Republic of Korea (October 1953), Thailand (September 1954) and Taiwan (December 1954). Washington also has developed non-alliance security relationships with Singapore and more sporadically with Indonesia. This 'San Francisco system' has proved both enduring and effective at stabilising the Asia-Pacific's evolution through the period of decolonisation, the Cold War and the post-Cold War Asian economic miracle. But the effectiveness of the San Francisco system cannot be attributed to the nature of the alliances themselves. As John Duffield ([2003](#): 247) argues, America's Pacific alliances are much more attenuated in form than those in Europe:

Especially in comparison with NATO...most of these US-sponsored arrangements were only weakly institutionalized. As a general rule, they involved less binding security guarantees, few if any common policymaking structures, little joint military planning, and minimal or no integrated command bodies and military infrastructure.

Several scholars have attempted to explain the difference between America's Pacific and Asian alliances (see, for example, Duffield [2003](#); Hemmer and Katzenstein [2002](#)). Yet comparatively little has been written about how the San Francisco system works as a stabiliser of regional order (notable exceptions include Cha [1999](#); Tow [2001a](#)). The most prominent metaphor used to explain the order-producing effects of US-centred institutions is the 'Gulliver' analogy. John Ikenberry and others have argued that the US created institutions after the Second World War as a way of

assuring lesser powers of its willingness to be constrained by a series of institutional commitments, in much the same way that Jonathan Swift's hero awoke to find himself tied down by dozens of Lilliputian restraints. In return for reassuring smaller partners of the parameters of its power and its ongoing international engagement through institutions, Washington ensured broad endorsement of its vision of international order (Ikenberry [2001](#)). Such explanations are more compelling in an Atlantic than a Pacific context. Washington's commitment shaping Europe's regional order can be seen through its long-term commitment of military personnel and equipment on the continent; its deep involvement in reconstructing societies and domestic institutions through the Marshall Plan; and its powerful advocacy of the construction of the European Community institutions (see, for example, Hogan [1987](#)). America's deep engagement in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) structures both reflected this commitment and enabled it to play a more directly hegemonic role in the protection of regional order.

The US played an entirely different role in the Pacific. Its reconstruction efforts were confined to specific countries – Japan and the Republic of Korea – and were attended by much less of a determination to reshape institutions and societies than in Europe. Similarly, its stationing of military personnel and equipment were national, although with strategic effects on the North Asian subregion. Its San Francisco alliance system supplied much lower levels of reassurance than Washington's commitment to regional security supplied to European states by NATO, and rarely were these institutions used directly by the US in its attempts to shape regional order. Even the advent of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) in 1955, intended as a Pacific counterpart to NATO, did not herald a qualitative shift in Washington's approach to the regional order: SEATO remained a pale reflection of its Atlantic cousin, largely due to America's continued emphasis on its bilateral alliances. Rather than attempting to play a 'Gulliver' role in the Pacific, the US has played a 'Leviathan' role through its Pacific alliances. The Leviathan role refers to a comparatively absent paramount power which, through its latent ability to enforce peace among regional rivals, makes the construction of basic regional society norms possible and enables the development of a liberal economic order. In Europe, the rapid development of overlapping multilateral institutions shows that former rivals viewed their own security as best assured by tying each other down, and involving the US

to make these multilateral constraints even more powerful. By contrast, the complete lack of formal security relations among American allies in the Pacific betrays a different approach to security: rather than trying to tie each other down multilaterally, Asian rivals have accepted Washington's Leviathan role in helping enforce limits on regional states' external behaviour. There are signs that even China, which has been harshly critical of US alliances in the region, is unwilling to push this criticism beyond rhetoric, because it realises the value of the US–Japan alliance as a strategic constraint on Japan.

Although Washington's preference for a Leviathan role in the Pacific has enabled the region's states, most of which are former colonies, much-needed latitude in constructing domestic institutions, the minimalism of the San Francisco system has at times led to a nervousness in the Asia-Pacific that has resulted in multilateral institutions being developed. In the mid-1960s, the quickening of the war in Indochina, the rise of ethnic and communist instability in Southeast Asia, and the fear of a security vacuum resulting from the departure of the colonial powers led to concerns that there were new security issues that could not effectively be addressed through the San Francisco system (see Irvine [1982](#); Khoman [1992](#); Weinstein [1976](#)). The five non-communist states of Southeast Asia came together to form ASEAN in August 1967. This was an institution committed to eliminating the types of intra-mural rivalries that would invite intervention by external powers, and to building national and regional resilience in Southeast Asia. Despite the organisation's formal commitment to non-alignment and neutrality, ASEAN was made completely compatible with the San Francisco system. Neither the Philippines nor Thailand were pressured to abrogate their alliances with the US. The unofficial ASEAN acknowledgement of the US as the *de facto* security guarantor for Southeast Asia briefly saw the light of day when in 1987 Philippines Foreign Minister Raúl Manglapus suggested a collective statement of support for US bases in certain Southeast Asian countries, only to be silenced by Indonesian President Suharto (Buszynski [1988](#): 84). Similarly, the development of a Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapons Free Zone did not affect the visits of nuclear ships and submarines of the US Pacific Fleet to Singapore, the Philippines or Thailand. In the eyes of its member states, ASEAN has always been a supplement to, and not an attempt to replace, the San Francisco system.

The end of the Cold War gave rise to a different set of concerns about the

adequacy of the San Francisco system. The demise of the Soviet bloc facilitated the brisk retirement of some standoffs in the region, such as the war in Cambodia and the confrontation between the Indochinese states and the rest of ASEAN. But other Cold War conflicts remained entrenched, and some of the aggressiveness such as from North Korea and China had begun to display an unpredictable belligerence in relation to these unresolved confrontations. A new attention to globalisation had raised awareness of a range of non-traditional threats that were less amenable to being addressed using traditional security mechanisms. And the blossoming of post-Cold War internationalist enthusiasm drew new attention to the paucity of Asia-Pacific institutions in comparison to Europe. In particular, the Conference on Security Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) emerged as a model for an institution that could address all of these new security concerns. Emerging out of the Helsinki Final Act in 1975, the CSCE was thought to have played a vital role in bringing the Cold War to an end. After the Cold War it developed into a formal multilateral institution, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), and assumed a role in bolstering the Atlantic community's security against a range of non-traditional threats. The CSCE model was explicitly invoked by Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans, who proposed a Conference for Security Cooperation in Asia in July 1990 (Evans [1990](#)).

The proposal was initially rejected by ASEAN, China, the US and Japan. Tokyo in particular was concerned about the prospect that a multilateral security institution in the region would ultimately undermine its own alliance with the US, and more generally the San Francisco system (Fukushima [2003](#): 81). However, as the closure of American bases at Subic Bay and Clark Field triggered fears about a possible US withdrawal from the region, ASEAN and Japan began to show greater interest in a multilateral security institution as a set of commitments in addition to the San Francisco system for tying in the US Leviathan presence in the region. Another motivation for promoting multilateralism was in order to engage China in the regional order, and to try to prevent the destabilising ripples of its rise to power and development and its assertion of its prerogatives. Several US allies agreed on the imperative of binding China 'into a complex web of multilateral interaction that would provide a political and strategic safety net, as well as enmeshing it in regional economic arrangements' (Kent [1997](#): 172). The launch of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) in July 1994 brought a different type of security

multilateralism to the Pacific stage. Building on APEC's lead, it assembled the region's powers in a single institution: the US, Japan, China, Russia and, improving on APEC, India. But the tradeoffs that needed to be made to collect these and other members together in a security institution had the effect of severely constricting the ARF's access structure and decision structure. Major security issues, such as the Taiwan straits, the South China Sea and the Korean peninsula, were off limits. In place of genuine consideration and mediation of pressing regional order issues, the ARF became mired in a three-step plan intended to build cooperative security. It was able to draw China into an increasingly vigorous role within the institution, but apart from occasionally addressing pressing issues such as the India–Pakistan standoff, the ARF has become increasingly marginal to most Asian powers' attempts to affect the regional order (see, for example, Yuzawa [2005](#)). The San Francisco system has re-emerged as a central regional order mechanism.

The rise of East Asian regionalism

Another bout of institution-building in Asia occurred not as a supplement to the San Francisco system but in order to counteract its effects. There is a potentially powerful regionalist sentiment existing in many Asian societies that draws variously on postcolonial grievance and Asian success to assert that Asian countries do not need Western models or advice about how to develop or organise their own politics. Its advocates believe that the era of Western ascendancy is coming to an end, that the future belongs to Asia. It organises around convictions that a lack of solidarity among Asian states allows outside powers to play a dominant role in the region, that as long as Asian countries' ties to external states are stronger than their ties with each other this will continue, and that only through coming together in genuine solidarity can Asia play a role in global politics commensurate with its size and weight. These are themes that resonate powerfully among many elites in Asian countries. They came to be asserted most potently between the mid-1980s and the mid-1990s in the form of 'Asian values' arguments, mounted variously by Singaporean, Malaysian and Japanese officials and academics. The Asian values movement argued that East Asian countries had found a model for economic development superior to that touted by the West, a model ultimately grounded in collectivist, consensualist, hierarchic 'Asian'

traditions, and that ultimately, such commonalities would find their expression in a cohesive regional structure bringing together East Asian societies but excluding Western societies. A powerful statement of East Asian solidarity occurred when Japan and many of Southeast Asia's semi-authoritarian regimes, which themselves were wary of internal unrest, took great pains to engage with China after the 1989 Tiananmen massacre, in pointed distinction to Western states' denunciations and isolation of Beijing. Perhaps the most prominent, and surprising case, was that of Japan. Despite signing the July 1989 G7 statement condemning the Tiananmen massacre, Japan was careful to distinguish its policies from the horrified responses of Western states. Prime Minister Sosuke Uno explained that "I say clearly that Japan invaded China 40 years ago. Japan cannot do anything against a people who experienced such a war. Sino-Japanese relations differ from Sino-United States relations" (Deng [1997](#): 380). Tokyo was quick to resume normal interaction with China, announcing its third yen loan package to China in 1990, and publicly sympathising with China's defence of its human rights practices.

It was these sentiments that Malaysian Prime Minister Mohammad Mahathir drew on in proposing an East Asian Economic Group (EAEG) in December 1990. Inspired also by the global resurgence of interest in economic regionalism that had seen the conclusion of the Single European Act, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and APEC, the EAEG concept was to unite Japan with the economies which were booming thanks to Japanese manufacturing investment, into a closer economic and political union. Also included in Mahathir's concept was China, and, potentially, the other states of Southeast Asia's northern rim, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar, only just beginning to emerge from Cold War conflicts and suspicions. Mahathir had been calling for Japan and China to play greater 'leadership' roles in the region for some years. Pointedly excluded from the EAEG concept were the Western states that had a long history of close economic and diplomatic links with East Asia: Australia, New Zealand and the US.

Australia and the US sensed danger in the EAEG proposal. They saw it as an attempt to supplant APEC's logic of providing institutional expression to trans-Pacific economic ties with a narrow vision of culturalist regionalism. An exclusive East Asian economic bloc could not only raise costly barriers between Australia and its North Asian trade partners, but also between the

economies of Pacific Asia and North America, possibly further fracturing the global economy into exclusive economic blocs, at a particularly low point in the progress towards the conclusion of the Uruguay Round global trade agreement. Washington and Canberra threw their weight behind the APEC concept as a more appropriate form of regionalism for Pacific Asia, one that included rather than compromised East Asian states' important economic and security links with North America and Australasia. They lobbied hard in Tokyo, and managed to secure a cool Japanese response to the EAEG proposal. A compromise was found whereby an East Asian Economic Caucus would come into being as an informal caucus group within APEC.

This compromise failed to satisfy Mahathir or the other supporters of the idea of an exclusive Asian regionalism. Mahathir refused to attend the inaugural APEC Leaders' Summit at Blake Island, which led to a protracted diplomatic standoff with Australian Prime Minister Paul Keating over Keating's characterisation of Mahathir as 'recalcitrant'. Mahathir and his supporters increased their 'Asian values' rhetoric in the early 1990s and became increasingly critical of the various institutional expressions of Western countries' links with East Asia. The objective was to prevent the EAEG concept being buried within APEC, and an important step towards this objective came in the announcement of regular discussions between East Asian countries and the EU states in the form of a biennial Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM). In bringing about ASEM, Mahathir had achieved a significant symbolic victory. He placed ASEM on a par with APEC, arguing that just as the former was a meeting between the East Asian region and the EU, so the latter was not a regional organisation but a meeting between the East Asian region and NAFTA. It was this symbolic assertion of ASEM, which repeatedly refused to accept Australia and New Zealand as members of the Asian side, that was more important than any substantive achievement of the talks themselves.

The Asian financial crisis provided the next impetus to the concept of East Asian regionalism. The evolution of the crisis produced a strong narrative of grievance against Western countries and Western-dominated institutions among many in the hardest-hit Asian economies. It was believed that the onset of the crisis was caused by Western investors and hedge-fund managers, that the crisis was worsened by the hardline prescriptions informed by Western neo-liberal economic dogma that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) attached to its assistance packages, and that the US had stayed

coldly aloof from the turmoil in some of its closest allies in the region, insisting they take their neo-liberal medicine. In the midst of the crisis, Tokyo proposed an Asian Monetary Fund, an East Asian regional arrangement to provide emergency liquidity to economies facing runs on their currency. The proposal was killed by heavy pressure on Japan from the US, which argued that such an arrangement would only dilute the IMF's capacity to achieve 'tough love' reforms where they were needed. But the concept survived in the form of an East Asian currency swap arrangement, which, even though most regional economies were shifting towards floating their currencies, became a strongly symbolic gesture towards East Asian regional cooperation (Lincoln [2004](#): 5).

The more important development occurred in Hanoi in December 1998, when ASEAN invited the leaders of Japan, China and the Republic of Korea to their sixth Leaders' Summit. The Hanoi meeting established a precedent whereby each successive ASEAN Leaders' Summit, held annually after 2001, included the leaders of the three North Asian powers. From these meetings developed the conception of ASEAN+3 (ASEAN plus China, Japan and South Korea) as a potential regional association. A process developed around the ASEAN+3 concept, including the formation and reports of the East Asia Vision Group and East Asia Study Group; and the holding of several 'breakfast meetings' among China, Japan and the Republic of Korea on the sidelines of the ASEAN+3 meetings.

Another parallel dynamic that has been driving East Asian regionalism has been the growing regional economic integration centred on China, coupled with Beijing's diplomatic offensive in Southeast Asia. Around 58 per cent of China's exports go to other East Asian states, and about 47 per cent of China's imports come from the region. East Asia supplies 60 per cent of China's foreign direct investment, compared to 20 per cent from the US and Europe combined. China's total imports from the ASEAN economies have increased ten-fold since 1990 (IMF [2005](#)). China's growth has been the single greatest driver of the recent economic growth of other East Asian countries. Trade and investment flows demonstrate that the recent growth of regional economies from Japan to Indonesia has been largely attributable to the dynamism of the Chinese economy. As a result, even those economies that are threatened by the growth of China's exports now have a vested interest in China's economic health and the continued success of its economic reform process.² Growing integration with the Chinese economy brings increased

vulnerability should the Chinese economy fail. And the spreading realisation that China shares many of the resource and financial security concerns of its neighbours has begun to reinforce a collaborative attitude to regional diplomacy.

In giving institutional expression to these economic dynamics through the conclusion of a China–ASEAN Free Trade Agreement, Beijing is seeking to demonstrate to its southern neighbours that they have nothing to fear from China's rise as a regional power. Its other objectives in Southeast Asia are to hedge against the capacity of the US to contain China. Initially, Beijing was highly critical of the San Francisco system, labelling US alliances in the region 'outdated' and 'dangerous' and ultimately directed at China. More recently, Beijing has heeded the signals that Asian states are unwilling to attenuate their ties with the US in return for stronger ties with China, and has moderated its rhetoric against US alliances in the region (Sutter [2005](#): 4). China's main near and medium-term objectives in the Asia-Pacific are to decrease the possibility that the US can activate a containment coalition against it. China's diplomacy is dedicated to building the sorts of relationships with Southeast, South and Central Asian countries so that, when pressured by Washington to help contain China, they will demur rather than jeopardise their relations with Beijing.

In the course of this manoeuvring, and as a consequence of increasing competition with Japan for regional influence, China has emerged as the new advocate of East Asian regionalism. This became manifest in the run-up to the December 2005 East Asia Summit (EAS) in Kuala Lumpur. China's preference for the EAS was that it would include only ASEAN+3 countries. Concerned that the EAS would further build China's regional influence at the expense of Tokyo, Japanese officials began a campaign to invite additional countries to the summit. Japanese delegations to Southeast Asian capitals arguing for an expanded EAS were followed in early 2005 by Chinese delegations urging the wisdom of retaining the ASEAN+3 membership (Malik [2006a](#)). In putting their case, Chinese diplomats breathed new life into the 'Asianism' that had driven earlier, Mahathirist versions of East Asian integration (Miller [2004](#)). Their arguments were based on the contention that East Asian countries face distinctive but common challenges in the current international order, and will only be able to respond adequately if they are able to caucus among themselves, and leave behind outside commitments and considerations. The *People's Daily* criticised Japan for 'trying to drag

countries outside this region such as Australia and India into the Community to serve as a counterbalance to China' (quoted in Malik [2006a](#): 4). On arriving in Kuala Lumpur, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao asserted that 'The East Asian Summit should respect the desires of East Asian countries and should be led only by East Asian countries', thereby setting up an implicit contrast between China's vision of 'East Asia for the East Asians' (quoted in Malik [2006a](#): 4) and Japan's vision of perpetuating Western dominance of the region. The resulting summit represented a stalemate between Beijing and Tokyo. Japan was successful in having India, Australia and New Zealand invited to Kuala Lumpur. China countered by inserting into the Chair's concluding statement that the ASEAN+3 grouping would be 'a vehicle for realising the dreams of forming the East Asian Community' (quoted in Malik [2006a](#): 4).

East Asian regionalism has gained a powerful boost through its new champion in Beijing. But it still faces important hurdles. Perhaps the greatest is the unresolved antagonism and competitive dynamic between China and Japan. In the words of one long-time observer of Japanese politics, 'Japan is not about to accept subordinate status in a future Chinese-dominated hegemonic order in East Asia. It will resist Chinese attempts to weaken its influence as a substantial power in the region' (Mulgan [2005](#): 111). When in 2001 ASEAN endorsed Chinese Premier Zhu Rongji's proposal to develop a China-ASEAN Free Trade Area by 2010, Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi responded by advancing the goal of concluding a Japan-ASEAN Closer Economic Partnership by 2012. It is hard to escape the impression that the acrimonious exchanges between China and Japan over war history, visits to the Yasakuni Shrine, soccer matches and territorial disputes are not partly played out for the benefit of regional audiences. In drawing out explosions of Chinese anger, Tokyo seems to be reminding Asian countries that a bullying disposition lies just beneath Beijing's recent diplomatic veneer; while in drawing attention to Japanese unwillingness to fully atone for the war, Beijing is attempting to stoke fears of Japanese revanchism. Another hurdle seems to be that the ASEAN states are reluctant to abandon the San Francisco system altogether and throw in their lot with Beijing. While China has been making great diplomatic strides with ASEAN members, several of the states of Southeast Asia have also tightened their ties with Washington. The 'war on terror' has seen Thailand and the Philippines strengthen their alliances with the US, and Singapore, Indonesia and Vietnam expand their defence

cooperation with Washington.

Conclusion: Asia-Pacific institutions and great power accommodation

In the face of the low probability that global institutions will reform to reflect the polarity shift currently underway, the question that remains is whether the regional institutions of the Asia-Pacific will become mechanisms for achieving an accommodation among Asia's rising great powers and the US, or whether they will increasingly become the vehicles for great power competition. Currently there are six regional institutions at play among the US and Asia's great powers: APEC, the ARF, the EAS, ASEAN+3, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) and the Trilateral Security Dialogue (TSD) among the US, Japan and Australia, which some have advocated expanding into a Quadrilateral Security Dialogue to include India. At the outset, none of these organisations appears to be an obvious candidate for mediating great power relations. The only one that includes all relevant players is the ARF, which is also arguably the most diffuse and constrained of them all. Both the ARF and APEC appear too broad in membership and restricted in what they are able to achieve, while ASEAN+3, SCO and TSD are currently seen as threatening to one or more of the great powers outside their membership.

On the other hand, there are worrying signs that great power manoeuvring within some regional institutions is setting off a dynamic of competitive regionalism. The competition between China and Japan through the alternative inclusive East Asia Summit and exclusive ASEAN+3 is one example. But there are potentially others. The TSD initiative has already aroused China's suspicions that it represents a potential containment framework. With the first summit meeting of the TSD on the sidelines of the APEC meetings in Sydney in September 2007, there are signs of its growing institutionalisation. The inclusion of India would likely further arouse Beijing's alarm. These developments could conceivably drive a competitive reaction from China through other regional mechanisms, namely ASEAN+3 and SCO. The latter in particular is an expression of defensive-assertive solidarity against US influence in the region. The SCO links Russia and China with Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. The organisation has developed its own counter-terrorism training and joint exercises and has promoted economic integration among its members.

Moscow and Beijing are unambiguous in their support for Central Asia's authoritarian regimes in their struggles against separatism and Islamist populism. The important point about TSD, ASEAN+3 and SCO is that they each gain substantial dynamism from implicitly forming against one or more of the other great powers. On the other hand, the inclusiveness of APEC, the ARF and the EAS contributes to these institutions' lack of dynamism, due to the suspicions and manoeuvring of the great powers within them.

One solution much discussed is to fall back on the old solution of ad hoc summitry, converting the Six Party Talks over North Korea into a great power concert in the Asia-Pacific. This would require taking out North Korea, and perhaps replacing it with India, and developing a regular process of consultations and perhaps summits (see, for example, Fukuyama [2005](#)). Another solution, which would ameliorate rather than exacerbate problems with institutional cluttering, would be to renovate one of the existing institutions to this purpose. The question would be to find the existing institution that is most easily renovated; offers the best chance to include all of the great powers and the US; which gives best expression to the great powers' coinciding interests and least expression to their antagonisms; and which offers the least opportunity for domination by any one power. The best candidate to emerge from this evaluative framework is the EAS. It is the newest of the region's institutions, and has had the least chance to settle into hardened understandings and rivalries, making it the most easily renovated. It could be relatively easily expanded to include the US and Russia, and equally easily restricted from further membership expansions. Its agendas of economic cooperation and collaboration against transnational challenges express clearly the great powers' coinciding interests. And its leavening of small and middle powers from Southeast Asia and Australasia offers the best chance for preventing domination by any one power while mitigating great power rivalries within the organisation.

The challenge, of course, will be to bring each of the great powers to the realisation that their interests are better served by active multilateral accommodation than by competitive manoeuvring. In the current global and regional contexts, there appears to be more of a likelihood that the latter sentiment will prevail. The San Francisco system stands as a clear expression of America's regional hegemon role, a mental block in both Washington's and Beijing's thinking about mutual accommodations. And the San Francisco system remains a clear security guarantee to many regional states, to some

extent removing any motivation to work towards alternative regional structures. The proliferation of global and regional institutions over the past sixty years shows how relatively easy institutional creation and expansion is in international relations. The imperative of the coming decades is renovation, consolidation and refocusing on the key issues of global order – and most pressingly mediating the emerging polarity shift. This will be by far the most challenging phase of the multilateral era.

¹ The G8's only non-Atlantic powers are Russia and Japan.

² Recent studies also suggest that the character and purpose of foreign business linkages is changing. Much of the rapid growth in the 1990s was in procurement or joint venture relationships aimed at the export market. China's entry into the World Trade Organization in 2001, however, has added momentum for greater levels of foreign ownership and investment aimed at accessing the domestic market. This is helping to weave US and Japanese economic interests more tightly into the fabric of the Chinese economy.

4 The United States: regional strategies and global commitments

Michael Mastanduno

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union and end of the Cold War, the global state system has been populated by one dominant power and several other important powers, none of which should rightly be characterised as a ‘peer competitor’ of the United States (Ikenberry [2002](#)). The United States is the sole global power with the capacity to exert decisive influence across different regions of the world, diplomatically, economically and militarily. Its military spending far exceeds that of any other state or combination of states, and its military technology grants it effective control of the global commons (Posen [2003](#)). The US economy, measured in terms of gross domestic product, remains more than twice as large as that of any other individual nation-state (*Economist* [2006b](#): 26). The European Union is collectively an economic peer of the United States, but lacks the degree of coherence and coordination in foreign and defence policy required for global power projection.

In terms of material capabilities we live, at least for now, in a unipolar system. As the United States has learned with difficulty in recent years, however, even a unipolar state cannot be everywhere, much less control events or simply dictate international outcomes. A unipolar state, just like any other state, does not always get what it wants and is forced to make choices and set priorities. Since the end of the Cold War, the United States has chosen to conduct a global foreign policy, but with particular emphasis on three key regions – Europe, East Asia and the Persian Gulf. It fashioned a strategy for each of these critical areas designed to maintain regional stability and advance its broader geopolitical and economic interests.

That global strategy worked reasonably well during the 1990s, but it is no longer viable. Developments in one region affect politics in others, and since 2001, the United States has faced tradeoffs and contradictions across its regional strategies. It has failed to produce stability in the Persian Gulf region and that failure, in turn, has complicated the American position in Europe and even more so in East Asia. At the same time, political developments within Europe and East Asia have made the US task of self-appointed regional stabiliser all the more challenging. As of 2008, the United States found itself

in need of rethinking its global strategy and the regional applications of it. Although it has several choices – focusing on the war on terrorism, managing competition from rising great powers, or initiating the revitalisation of multilateral institutions – it is most likely to muddle along reactively, without clear direction for the foreseeable future.

The long 1990s and US foreign policy

US foreign policy since the end of the Cold War may be divided into two phases: the ‘long decade’ of the 1990s, and the period since 11 September 2001. The relative power position of the United States has remained essentially the same across the two phases, but the policies, priorities and overall global orientation of the United States have changed in significant ways.

The principal objective of the United States during the 1990s was the preservation of its dominant global position (Mastanduno [1997](#)). Unipolarity emerged rather suddenly and unexpectedly. As early as 1992, American policy-makers began to express quietly the core objective of assuring that no other state or group of states would emerge as a peer competitor, with the combination of resources and intentions that characterised the Soviet challenge during the Cold War (Jervis [1993](#)). US policies and strategies were fashioned to serve this grand strategic objective.

US strategy towards potential peer competitors was clear – ‘reassure and integrate’. For example, West Germany and Japan had been transformed into civilian powers after the Second World War and forty-five years later found themselves fully recovered and on the winning side at the end of the Cold War. The geopolitical uncertainty that accompanied the collapse of East versus West raised the question of whether a reunified Germany and more formidable Japan would break their postwar pattern and re-emerge as independent great powers. US diplomacy sought to assure each country that an independent military posture was unnecessary. The United States made clear that the core institutional structures of the Cold War – NATO and the US–Japan alliance, within which Germany and Japan were important but subordinate alliance partners – would be revitalised and continued in the new and uncertain post-Cold War environment. The US-centred international order would live on, with only minor modifications in the Cold War roles of the supporting actors.

Russia and China were, from the US perspective, the major and minor villains of the Cold War drama. American policy-makers calculated that their former communist adversaries could be coaxed from the dark side if offered a place in the US-centred order. US strategy was to socialise each into accepting international rules and standards of behaviour preferred by the United States. The tacit deal offered to each was to be a responsible partner (today the preferred US term for dealing with China is ‘responsible stakeholder’) as defined by the United States, and receive in exchange international political stature and the benefits of participation in a prosperous liberal world economy. During the 1990s, Russia was offered incentives to reform its economy and democratise its politics, financial assistance to dismantle its nuclear weapons, and the honour of becoming a member of the elite grouping of industrial powers (the ‘G7’ became the ‘G8’). China was offered a path to join the World Trade Organization (WTO) and gain access to Western markets, technology and investment.

US military strategy during the 1990s was remarkably conservative, particularly in light of its superior relative capabilities. The United States proved to be a risk-averse dominant power. It led a successful multilateral coalition and air campaign against Iraq in 1990–1 but ended its ground war quickly, leaving Saddam Hussein in power rather than risk higher casualties and the possible fracture of Iraq. It intervened in Somalia but retreated after taking two dozen casualties in a firefight with a recalcitrant war-lord. Both the first George Bush and Bill Clinton administrations tried to deflect the Bosnian genocide as a European problem. Clinton was eventually drawn into using air power and ground troops whose principal mission as peacekeepers seemed to be self-protection. The Clinton administration evaded the Rwandan genocide, and in Kosovo it suffered only two casualties, explicitly ruling out the use of ground forces and relying instead on a high-altitude campaign of aerial bombing designed to minimise the risk to the US military (Daalder and O’Hanlon [2000](#)).

US political strategy during the 1990s was similarly conservative and might be characterised as ‘democratic enlargement, as long as it is not too much trouble’. The United States, as always, was eager to oversee the spread of its domestic political structure and values. But it was reluctant to bear significant costs, militarily or economically, to further this objective. During 1993 and 1994, the Clinton administration agonised over whether to intervene in tiny, neighbouring Haiti to restore democracy following a

military coup. It tried diplomacy and economic sanctions and finally resolved the crisis with the threat of a military intervention which, to its apparent relief, it was able to transform from an invasion to a peacekeeping mission (Shacochis [1999](#)). The experience of Haiti seemed to reinforce the administration's broader view that coercive intervention in support of democracy was not necessary, because the tide of history was moving in the preferred US direction. Democracy was taking hold in many parts of the world due to the hard efforts of local populations; to help that process along required a series of gentle nudges rather than dramatic hammer blows on the part of the self-appointed champion of democracy.

US international economic strategy centred on the promotion of liberalisation and privatisation and complemented the political one. For US officials, all good things go together – democracy, economic freedom through private ownership, open markets, and social stability and prosperity. Here, too, historical trends were reinforcing US preferences. The alternatives to economic liberalism – import-substitution and nationalisation in the developing world, state-led developmental capitalism in Asia and, of course, the central planning of the Soviet world – were each exposed as incapable of sustaining economic growth despite their possible social virtues. The United States could lead by example, place its diplomatic weight behind global and regional trade negotiations, turn crises like the Mexican one in 1994 and the Asian one in 1997–8 into opportunities to promote openness and privatisation, and count on the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank to spread its preferred ‘Washington Consensus’ globally.

In summary, the United States during the 1990s was a status quo global power. US officials plausibly believed time was on their side. Other major powers would eventually come to see the benefits of participation in a US-centred world order. American policy-makers struck a nuclear agreement in 1994 with North Korea in the hope that the regime would cooperate and reform, or eventually burn itself out. They believed or at least hoped they might keep Saddam Hussein ‘in the box’ through United Nations (UN) inspections, economic sanctions and the selective use of coalition air power. The world was a messy place, but not nearly as dangerous as the nuclear and ideological standoff of the Cold War. The exercise of unipolar power might be needed on occasion to steer events in the right direction, but generally the role of foreign policy was to facilitate a process in which the positive forces of history played themselves out in favour of the United States.

The 1990s and US regional priorities

Europe and East Asia are key sources of industrial supply and consumer products for the United States and important destinations for US exports and investments. They also contain many democratic allies of the United States and most of the world's potential or aspiring great powers (for example, Japan, China, India, Germany and Russia). The Persian Gulf is the core source of energy supplies for the United States and its closest allies, and home to several states with long-standing antagonistic relationships with America's key regional ally, Israel. So it is not surprising that US policy-makers fashioned a strategy during the 1990s – one befitting a status quo power – that called on the United States to serve as a source of regional stability and crisis manager of last resort. The three key regions posed different challenges, but at least during the 1990s the United States managed to play a constructive stabilising role across the three simultaneously, without facing difficult tradeoffs in terms of diplomatic attention or resource allocation.

In post-Cold War Europe, the principal challenges were to integrate Russia into the Western system while assuring it did not reconstitute a threat to its neighbours; create stability in Central Europe by expanding Western influence eastward; and respond to the instability generated by the collapse of multinational states such as the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia. For the United States, NATO was the critical instrument for each of these tasks. With the demise of the Warsaw Pact, NATO after the Cold War had to adapt to new tasks or risk finding itself out of business (Wallander [2000](#)). It expanded its membership to include former Warsaw Pact states and even states recreated out of the break-up of the Soviet Union. It was the decision-making unit for settling the Bosnian War and later confronting Serbia over Kosovo. 'Partnership for Peace' arrangements gave Russia a say in NATO deliberations while it expanded eastward, without actually providing the Russians a full seat at the table. NATO, which according to Lord Ismay's famous dictum functioned to keep the Americans in, the Russians out and the Germans down, was modified to meet the new conditions after the Cold War. The new NATO kept the Americans in, the unified Germans in, brought the rest of the Central Europeans in, and made sure the Russians were not in, but not completely out either.

East Asia posed a more formidable challenge since, in the academic

catchphrases of the early 1990s, it was 'ripe for rivalry' rather than 'primed for peace' (Friedberg [1993/94](#)). The Cold War didn't quite end in East Asia, and classic balance-of-power problems persisted as well. Stalemates between North and South Korea and between mainland China and Taiwan not only remained unresolved, but threatened to burst into local and possibly regional military conflicts. The rise of China created anxiety for Japan, and the possible normalisation of Japan created anxiety for China. Historical animosities and resentments remained close to the surface of contemporary regional politics; Japanese, Chinese and Korean leaders could not muster anything approaching the dramatic symbolism of German and French leaders Helmut Kohl and François Mitterand walking hand in hand across the Second World War battlefields to put it all behind them.

After some initial ambivalence, the United States came to perceive itself as the 'cork in the bottle' necessary to contain these dangerous regional pressures. With the Nye Initiative of 1995, the Clinton administration proclaimed its commitment of deep regional engagement of indefinite duration. It reaffirmed and committed to strengthen Cold War bilateral alliances, especially with Japan and South Korea. It tried, not always successfully, to play a delicate balancing game of deterring China while reassuring it about the intentions of the US–Japan alliance, and reassuring Japan that the alliance was a robust security instrument despite the uncertainty of the post-Cold War regional and global context. The United States took the initiative to defuse the North Korean nuclear crisis of 1994, and made a cautious show of force in 1995–6 in an effort to accomplish double deterrence of China and Taiwan. US policy-makers supported regional initiatives as long as they were in the spirit of open regionalism – inclusive directly or at least indirectly of the United States – and not contradictory to the bilateral, hub-and-spokes security arrangements that placed the United States at the centre of regional security (Mastanduno 2003).

In the Persian Gulf, the consistent US objective over several decades was to assure the steady flow of energy resources at low or – once the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) came to exercise market power – at least stable and predictable prices. Its traditional regional strategy was offshore balancing. During the 1970s, the United States relied on conservative autocratic regimes in Iran and Saudi Arabia to serve as 'regional policemen' in exchange for special relationships with the United

States and in particular with the US military. The strategy foundered in 1979 when Iran experienced regime collapse and radicalisation. During the 1980s, the United States perceived Iran as the greater regional threat and sided with Iraq in the Iran–Iraq War as the lesser of two evils. By the end of the decade, Iraq emerged as the greater threat to regional and energy security, and the offshore balancer intervened onshore to cut Iraq down to size – yet not dismantle it for fear of encouraging some other would-be regional hegemon.

The 1990–1 Gulf War proved a turning point. When the war concluded, the United States remained onshore, establishing and quietly expanding a more enduring military presence. US forces stayed to monitor and enforce ‘no fly zones’, support the UN inspection and dismantling effort, and generally reassure Saudi Arabia and Kuwait that Iraq would not try again. The strategy succeeded in the sense that Iraq was kept down. But the diplomatic costs were high. The economic sanctions against Iraq turned out to be a humanitarian disaster, and it was evident by the late 1990s, with the attacks on US embassies in Africa and the USS *Cole* in the Persian Gulf, and even clearer in retrospect, that the US military presence increased its value as a target for terrorism.

The United States exercised hegemony during the long 1990s quietly and cheaply. It preserved its preponderance and operated in three key regions with minimal conflicts across those efforts. Although Secretary of State Madeleine Albright immodestly declared the United States the ‘indispensable’ global power, it was clear that the United States could not solve the world's problems, in concert with others or much less alone. But it could manage them, and did so without provoking a major regional war, the formation of a major power coalition against it, or significant domestic opposition to its global role.

11 September and US foreign policy

The events of 11 September 2001 had profound effects on US foreign policy. Historians will have ample time to debate whether the George W. Bush administration's policy-makers misunderstood the challenge, over-reacted to it, or perhaps manipulated it for political gain. What is clear is that 11 September changed the way American officials viewed the international environment. In response, the United States became more of a *revisionist* state, seeking to transform its international setting rather than being content

simply to preserve or modify it incrementally.

The most important shift was perceptual. After 11 September, US policy-makers moved from feeling that time was on their side and the international system was moving in the right direction, to a belief that time was running out and the international system was dangerous and in urgent need of transformation. They framed the newly recognised threat in terms of a triple combination of terrorism, rogue states and weapons of mass destruction. They promoted the idea that the United States is essentially engaged in a new Cold War – a great struggle, a long war of uncertain duration and high stakes (US National Security Council [2002](#)).

This shift in worldview had important consequences for the general orientation of US foreign policy (Mastanduno [2005a](#)). US rhetoric and policy returned to a binary view of the external world. Great struggles are less about nuance, and more about right and wrong, about being on the side of good or the side of evil. President Bush aptly captured this sentiment by demanding to know whether other states were ‘for us or against us’. The war on terrorism has been framed by government officials and opinion leaders in ways similar to the earlier great struggles against communism and fascism. The depiction of an axis of evil, encompassing the rogue states of Iran, Iraq and North Korea, purposely echoed the ‘axis’ enemies of the West's struggle against fascism and the ‘evil empire’ designation of the Soviet Union by President Ronald Reagan during the Cold War. After 11 September, American decision-makers have been unlikely to perceive external conflicts in the way the elder Bush and Clinton administrations initially framed the Bosnian conflict of the 1990s – as a complex, multidimensional and historically rooted struggle in which it was hard even to distinguish aggressors and victims, much less identify a decisive course of action.

In light of how the crisis was framed, it is not surprising that in response, US decision-makers became less concerned with developing an international consensus and focused more narrowly and immediately on protection of the US homeland. In the face of one attack and the prospect of others, Washington felt it could hardly afford the luxury of deferring to the perspectives and interests of well-intentioned allies, much less to the politics and dictates of the UN Security Council. The Bush administration sought uncritical supporters rather than equal partners who might differ on the perception of threat or appropriateness of response. They naturally preferred ‘coalitions of the willing’, which by definition would include supporters,

rather than rely on well-established institutional arrangements that potentially offered other states a more independent platform. The Bush administration chose to conduct the initial intervention in Afghanistan essentially on its own, even though NATO members offered their support through the unprecedented invocation of Article 5, and Australia, Japan and South Korea did the same by employing the relevant articles in their bilateral security treaties with the US to justify their own military contributions to American operations. US policy-makers subsequently pulled together a coalition of the willing to intervene in Iraq, in defiance of both the UN Security Council and NATO.

It is also not surprising that US foreign policy has become more risk-acceptant. The interventions in Afghanistan and especially Iraq defied the military conservatism of the 1990s. The United States intervened to undertake regime change in Afghanistan, despite the history of great power failure in that inhospitable environment. US forces had absorbed over 500 combat casualties in Afghanistan as of July 2008, more than ten times as many as in Somalia a decade earlier. Afghanistan has been a 'small' war compared to the ambitious US undertaking in Iraq. The Bush administration initiated a discretionary, preventive war against Saddam Hussein, and engaged in an extraordinarily difficult nation-building campaign in the face of ethnic conflict and civil war. As of July 2008 the United States had suffered 4,100 combat deaths in Iraq, a level of casualties that was politically unthinkable a decade earlier. Until 2002, US interventions were governed by a set of post-Vietnam guidelines: they should be short in duration, with minimal casualties, and with a clear exit strategy. The wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have dragged on with mounting casualties, no clear exit strategy and the risk that intervention may spread to neighbouring countries such as Iran. During the 1990s, 'better safe than sorry' meant acting cautiously and reserving military force as an instrument of reluctant last resort. After 11 September, it came to mean acting preventively to negate a possible threat before it fully materialised.

The new willingness to accept risk applies to opportunities as well as threats. The basic premise has become that the United States must change the world in order to be safe within it. That ideological impulse, of course, was not an innovation of the Bush administration. The United States has long been an ideological power with a liberal internationalist mission. Two maxims capture this ideological imperative. One is that 'America is safer if

the rest of the world looks like America', which helps to explain the current ambitious plan to transform Iraq and the rest of the troubled Middle East in the direction of political democracy and economic liberalisation. The second maxim is the belief that 'within every foreigner is an American struggling to get out', which provides for American officials the compelling though naïve idea that America's transforming efforts will be welcomed wherever they are imposed. These beliefs are deeply embedded in American political culture. Liberal democrats and neo-conservative Republicans may disagree on the means, but both strongly support the idea that the spread of democracy is vital to US national security. What has changed since 11 September in the minds of policy-makers is the urgency of the task (security threats dictate that we no longer have the luxury to wait patiently), the willingness to take risks to achieve it (the attempt to transform the Middle East could set off a sequence of unintended and uncontrollable consequences) and the means employed (the use of military force, or 'Wilsonianism in boots').

The consequences of 11 September in US domestic politics have also been significant. During the 1990s, domestic politics in the United States served as a restraint on an ambitious foreign policy – so much so that the rest of the world sometimes complained that there was not enough US engagement and leadership. Since 11 September, the public, Congress and opposition party have been remarkably passive and willing, as during the early Cold War decades, to give the president and executive a relatively free hand in conducting a wartime foreign policy and even in placing constraints on personal liberties at home. The public remained supportive of the Iraq intervention long after it became clear that weapons of mass destruction were not found and that there was no operational link between Saddam Hussein and al-Qaeda (Kaufmann [2004](#)). Bush was re-elected in 2004 despite the costly and inconclusive Iraq War; his Democratic challenger did not oppose the war but argued that the Democrats would fight it in a more competent way. By the 2008 election, the public, Congress and opposition Democrats became bolder in challenging the president over Iraq and in calling for a phased withdrawal of American forces. But it is striking that no one in the mainstream American political debate seems prepared to challenge the broader notion that the long global war on terrorism needs to be at the forefront of US foreign policy priorities.

Finally, the consequences of the US response to 11 September for its international reputation have been profound. The United States has become,

in the eyes of many states, more unilateral, less reassuring and more imperial (Walt [2005](#)). It is not surprising that over the past several years the United States itself has been characterised as a rogue state, and scholars and other observers have begun to write, usually disapprovingly, of the United States as an excessively nationalistic builder of empire (Lieven 2004).

11 September and US regional priorities

After 11 September, the United States has remained committed to its enduring geopolitical and economic interests in Europe, East Asia and the Persian Gulf. But it now faces unattractive tradeoffs across its regional efforts and its overall strategy as a regional stabiliser is no longer viable. US behaviour has been the source of regional *instability* in the Persian Gulf. Its relations with European allies have suffered as a result, and its efforts to integrate Russia into a US-centred international order have failed. In East Asia, the challenge of maintaining regional stability has increased at precisely the time that US diplomatic attention is both more limited and more focused on the war on terrorism than on the concerns of states in the region.

The Persian Gulf and nearby Southwest Asia are the central front in the US war on terrorism, just as Central Europe was during the initial stages of the Cold War. The major share of US diplomatic attention and a massive amount of economic and military resources have flowed there as a consequence. Shortly after 11 September, the United States invaded Afghanistan to dismantle the Taliban regime. It succeeded militarily, but the more difficult nation-building effort stalled and as of 2009 occupying US and NATO forces continue to face a hostile and increasingly unstable environment. As it engaged Afghanistan, the Bush administration calculated that the threat of Saddam Hussein possibly having and sharing weapons of mass destruction, and the opportunity to install a *democratic* oil-producing ally in the region justified a second intervention against Iraq, this one without the legitimising benefits of a broad multilateral coalition. Some five years later, much of the US army and priority US diplomatic attention is still tied down in Iraq. The war was supposed to be short and decisive, but the preferred US military strategy of lightning strikes ('shock and awe') and quick extrication to be ready for the next war backfired this time with a vengeance.

For the United States, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan share some uncomfortable similarities with the earlier Vietnam conflict. Once again the

United States is bogged down in counter-insurgency wars of indefinite duration in a cultural setting it does not fully understand. Counter-insurgency and nation-building go hand in hand, and the US embassy in Baghdad now has the dubious distinction of being the largest US embassy in the world, just as the embassy in Saigon was during the Vietnam intervention. The United States seems to be fighting multiple enemies, and its local governing allies struggle to establish the political stability needed to backstop the military effort. The war at home has intensified; the American public has lost patience and domestic politics, no longer a source of support for the president, is now dividing along the 'for the war or against the war' lines that President Bush initially foisted on the outside world with a united home front behind him.

Most ominously, the Iraq conflict threatens to spill over into one with Iran. Neighbouring Iran is meddling against US forces in Iraq, pursuing its own nuclear weapons agenda, and supporting regional actors engaged in armed conflict with Israel. The most striking unintended consequence of the Iraq War has been the rise in the regional power and prestige of Iran. America's offshore balancing strategy has collapsed. With Iraq no longer in a position to balance Iran, the United States faces an array of unpalatable choices: withdraw from Iraq and cede possible regional hegemony to Iran, attack Iran and risk an even greater catastrophe than has befallen the United States in Iraq, or try to find common ground with a regime that it despises as a charter member of President Bush's axis of evil.

Turning to Europe, the war on terrorism altered US strategy and damaged US relations with its major allies. NATO solidarity was ruptured by the decision to intervene in Iraq. In contrast to the Bosnian conflict a decade earlier, the United States worried little about the integrity of NATO and instead took the opportunity to divide and conquer, pitting what former US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld termed 'old Europe' against Britain and 'new Europe' in forming a coalition of the willing. The regional political and security situation within Europe itself is sufficiently stable for the United States to be tempted into believing that these diplomatic disputes carry no significant consequences for US vital interests. That view could be proved wrong if a core of disaffected European countries took greater initiative to work together and at cross-purposes with the United States, or if a NATO in disarray is unprepared to react to possible regional challenges from President Vladimir Putin's more authoritarian Russia. It is not surprising that in Bush's second term, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice devoted considerable

efforts to repairing US relations with France, Germany and other West European states.

These efforts are all the more necessary because US relations with Russia have deteriorated badly since the initiation of the Iraq War in 2003. The United States can no longer take for granted Russian support in the war on terrorism, much less credibly claim, as it did in 2002, that all the great powers were 'on the same side' in the struggle (US National Security Council [2002](#): ii). What began as a series of disputes in the diplomatic arena escalated by 2007, in an echo of the Cold War, to posturing in the military arena (Ferguson [2007](#)). Flush with oil money, Putin announced that Russia's strategic bomber fleet, grounded since 1992, would resume patrolling the North Atlantic and Central Pacific. He also announced plans for a naval expansion, including the addition of six carriers to the Russian fleet. Russia staked its claim to the seabed beneath the North Pole, undertook military exercises with fellow members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, and declared a moratorium on Russia's observance of the Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty that it had signed in 1990.

This deterioration in US–Russian relations is costly for US efforts in the Persian Gulf. Any serious US effort to isolate Iran globally would require the cooperation of Russia. During the early 1990s, Russia supported the US war coalition against Iraq, but this time it likely will be in no mood to cooperate. Putin, in fact, made a point of visiting Iran in 2007 and used the visit to move closer to Iran diplomatically and economically, and to warn the United States not to attack.

The war on terrorism has had equally profound and potentially more detrimental consequences for US strategy in East Asia. Notwithstanding renewed US–Russian tensions, the prospects for regional instability remain greater in East Asia than in Europe, and arguably are greater now than they were during the 1990s. The China–Taiwan problem remains unresolved, and Taiwan may believe its window of opportunity for greater independence is closing due to its economic integration with the mainland. North Korea admitted in 2002 that it had continued its nuclear weapons programme despite the 1994 Agreed Framework. In 2003, it announced its withdrawal from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and fired missiles into the waters between South Korea and Japan, and on 4 July 2006 it test-fired six more missiles. Significant progress was made in the Six Party Talks in 2007; whether it will lead to the abandonment of North Korea's nuclear ambitions

or will be simply another round in the ongoing game of coercive diplomacy remains to be seen. Relations between China and Japan have deteriorated badly since 2001. Conflicts at sea have occurred over energy resources and submarine incursions, and the intractable political conflict over how to interpret and make amends for historical wrongdoings seems far from resolution. Violent anti-Japanese protests over the history issue broke out in China in 2005, most likely with the tacit approval of the Chinese government.

If the United States still fashions itself as the ‘cork in the bottle’, it has much work to do. But the problem it faces is that its ability to serve as a regional stabiliser is seriously constrained by the developments that have taken place since 11 September. America's broader foreign policy strategy has become less compatible with its preferred regional role in East Asia for the following reasons.

First, any serious effort to serve as a regional stabiliser requires the assurance of sustained and high-level diplomatic attention. But, priority diplomatic attention is, by definition, limited. It is difficult for the United States to provide assurances when it is clear to local actors that US priorities lie elsewhere. European diplomats worried during the mid-1990s when US attention seemed to shift to Asia. Japan worried about being ‘passed’ during the late 1990s as US diplomatic attention turned to China. In those situations the US could recalibrate its efforts to provide some credible reassurance. The current risk is that those in East Asia who prefer a sustained US regional role will perceive that the United States is too preoccupied in the Middle East and Persian Gulf to make more than cosmetic attempts. One Asian observer recently complained that US policy-makers ‘are focused on the wrong geopolitical chessboard, they are making the wrong moves, and they are wasting or losing valuable political capital accumulated over decades’ (Mahbubani [2007](#): 17).

The problem of distraction is exacerbated by the tendency of the United States to channel much of the regional attention it does offer through the prism of the war on terrorism. Southeast Asian nations, for example, have a variety of concerns – for example, poverty, drug trafficking, education and the environment – that do not easily fit into the terrorism/rogue states/weapons of mass destruction paradigm that is preoccupying US policy-makers (Funabashi [2007](#)). While the United States focuses on the North Korean nuclear programme and the need for regime change, South Korea's priority concern is North Korean instability and the possibility of regime

collapse leading to a flood of refugees over the border.

In a speech in Singapore in May 2008, US Defense Secretary Robert Gates opened by saying that ‘for those who worry that Iraq and Afghanistan have distracted the United States from Asia and developments in this region, I would counter that we have never been more engaged with more countries’ (Gates [2008](#)). Gates reiterated that the United States has enduring interests in the region, as a ‘resident’ power rather than an occupying one. He pledged US responsiveness to particular regional concerns such as humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. The fact that the Defense Secretary felt compelled to offer these assurances reflected an official US awareness of the significance of the distraction problem.

Second, US military resources are finite and constrained as well. US military power is formidable across the board, but more so in the air and at sea than on land. The US ground forces are sufficient for a global role as long as the ‘lightning strike and quick exit’ strategy works. US ground forces tied up in a serious conflict in Iraq are not available for a serious conflict on the Korean peninsula. This constraint manifests itself even outside the unlikely event of a protracted ground war. The global war on terrorism has prompted the US Department of Defense to proclaim that ‘everything is moving everywhere’ (Cossa [2003](#): 5) – that the strategy of maintaining static forces on the ground in East Asia and Europe must give way to a more mobile strategy in which forces can move quickly from one trouble spot to another around the globe. US diplomats have sought to assure South Korea that moving US forces from the central front would not constitute a dilution in the US commitment to defence, but South Korea could hardly be faulted for suspecting otherwise.

Third, a distracted United States is diplomatically less nimble in taking or responding to regional initiatives. Regional actors and relationships do not stand still, waiting patiently for other problems to be solved. Chinese ‘soft power’ appears to have grown significantly in recent years, and at the expense of the United States, particularly in Southeast Asia. Regional initiatives that explicitly exclude the United States (for example, the East Asia Summit in December 2005) or that the United States chooses to bypass (for example, the thirtieth anniversary of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations meeting in September 2007) raise questions about US engagement and commitment, even if they turn out to be politically less consequential. Deferring to or even encouraging China's initiative, as the United States has

done at various junctures of the North Korean crisis, may reflect sensible diplomacy. But it also naturally raises questions, in the minds of other actors, about the regional staying power of a unipolar state that is geographically distant and has the option of stepping back from its regional role and becoming an offshore balancer of last resort.

Fourth, the more distracted the United States, the more tempting it may become to rely heavily on close relations with regional surrogates. Japan is certainly not prepared to be a 'regional policeman' of the United States, and, as the decision to relocate US forces from Okinawa to Guam suggests, both governments recognise the domestic political sensitivity in Japan of the US military presence. Nevertheless, since 2001 the US–Japan alliance has become sufficiently more robust, with the United States asking Japan to do more militarily and Japan complying eagerly rather than reluctantly, even if that implies constitutional revision. The intensified mutual dependence and transformed alliance, heralded with great fanfare by both governments in 2005, may have unintended consequences detrimental to regional security. During the 1990s, US policy-makers believed that regional stability required a delicate diplomatic balancing act between Japan and China. After 11 September, the US tilted decisively in Japan's direction. As Japan has reciprocated and moved closer to the United States, its relations with China and South Korea have deteriorated to the detriment of regional stability.

The choices ahead: a new global strategy?

The US experience reflects one dimension of the reciprocal relationship between globalism and regionalism. The global strategy of the United States shapes its approach to particular regions, while developments in one region affect developments in others and in the overall global strategy. As it nears the end of the second post-Cold War decade, the United States will be forced to confront the viability and desirability of its global strategy. At least three options present themselves for the top priority, or main mission, of US foreign policy. Each has sufficient drawbacks, so that no single priority is likely to emerge as a clear winner, in the way that containment of the Soviet Union emerged and endured during the Cold War. The likely outcome is that US policy-makers will muddle along reactively, emphasising different sets of strategic priorities as events unfold.

One obvious strategic choice would be to continue the emphasis on the

global war on terrorism. The words and behaviour of the Bush administration clearly suggested this should remain America's top priority. The war is being fought on multiple fronts and the US government has reorganised itself (for example, with the creation of a massive Department of Homeland Security) to conduct the struggle, at home and abroad, over the long term. A second major attack on US soil would reinforce these efforts and confirm the centrality of the struggle against terrorism.

Yet, as many have pointed out, a war on terrorism is somewhat peculiar as a central strategic focus. Terrorism is a tactic, not an actor. The enemy is not Nazi Germany or the Soviet Union, but an ill-defined and amorphous collection of non-state actors and state supporters with different agendas, and who do not necessarily coordinate effectively across borders. It is remarkable that some seven years into this war, an agreed-upon description or label of the enemy does not exist in American political discourse. Even more troubling is that the war on terrorism seems to gain its momentum from the way the United States is fighting it. Iraq was not a central front until the United States intervened there, creating instability and a breeding ground for al-Qaeda and other disaffected groups. In its struggle to combat terrorism the United States has emphasised military instruments more than moral authority, and in so doing has compromised its moral authority and offered its enemies the opportunity to gain further recruits. This war cannot be won in some traditional way, with the taking of territory, defeat of an army and ceremonial surrender of a leader on a ship in the Pacific Ocean. The tragic irony is that the more US policy-makers emphasise the military aspects of the war on terrorism, the more likely they will exacerbate rather than diminish the conflict.

A second strategic choice is to turn US foreign policy more squarely to the challenge of emerging great power competition. One of the striking features of the war on terrorism as grand strategy is that it focuses on the periphery of the international system, on relatively weaker states and non-state actors. Yet history suggests unipolarity will not last forever and great power challengers eventually will emerge. Although Putin's Russia may exhibit the ambition, its global power potential is too dependent on the fortunes of energy markets whose continued upward momentum is hardly assured. China is the more likely challenger, albeit a patient one, possessing the requisite combination of size, rapid economic growth and the desire for status in the international system (Goldstein [2005](#)). Washington has cast a wary eye on China since the

middle of the 1990s; only 11 September and the US reaction to it relegated it to a secondary position.

Even if China's rapid rise continued unabated, and this is by no means a foregone conclusion, the bipolar struggle of the Cold War is not likely to be replayed. China is far more integrated into the liberal world economy than the Soviet Union ever was, and Chinese leaders accept the basic ideological premise of global capitalism even as they struggle to maintain centralised political control. The United States views China as a potential geopolitical and security competitor, but also as an economic partner that supplies US customers, hosts US foreign direct investment and accumulates more dollars in its central bank than any other state. Even if the United States proves willing to disrupt this economic interdependence, it is not clear that other states, in Europe or East Asia, would line up behind the United States in traditional bipolar fashion. Possible Chinese aggression against Taiwan, Japan or significant elements of its own population could certainly alter these calculations. But in the absence of geopolitical crisis the US–China relationship is likely to remain an affair of ambivalence, with China challenging patiently and the United States hedging between security containment and economic cooperation.

A third option is to emphasise global leadership through the revitalisation of international institutions. Liberal internationalist critics of the Bush administration believed the United States compromised its international legitimacy by turning its back on its postwar commitment to multilateralism, coalition-building and self-restraint (Ikenberry [2001](#)). The resolution of global problems – climate change, poverty alleviation, trade liberalisation, the management of financial crises, drug trafficking and terrorism – requires cross-border cooperation, offering a leadership opportunity to the United States.

With the new Obama administration, the pendulum in US foreign policy is likely to swing back in the multilateral direction. But it will be difficult to sustain multilateral institution-building as a core foreign policy purpose. US policy-makers throughout the postwar era have treated multilateralism and international institutions pragmatically, more as instruments of convenience than as a policy priority reflecting a deep, principled commitment (Mastanduno [2005b](#)). The practice is currently reinforced by the polarisation in US domestic politics and erosion of the foreign policy centre that has championed multilateralism throughout the postwar era (Kupchan and

Trubowitz [2007](#)). Finally, significant parts of the global institutional architecture – the UN, IMF and General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade/WTO – are themselves in a troubled state. These institutions were created after the Second World War to solve one set of problems, and though they have been adapted, are no longer especially well-suited to manage contemporary geopolitical and economic realities. New institutions, in turn, are difficult to create without the impetus or shock of a depression or war.

With no obvious grand strategy presenting itself, US policy-makers of either main political party are likely to move incrementally, trying to focus simultaneously on terrorism and rogue states, and on the rise of China, while using international institutions selectively to further national interests. It is possible to conceive of a best-case scenario as the United States juggles these priorities: terrorism fades into a low-intensity annoyance while China and perhaps even Russia are integrated peacefully into the existing order. The obvious worst-case scenario – the simultaneous escalation of the war on terrorism and deterioration in US relations with China and Russia – is similarly plausible. Even if it cannot fashion a more positive strategy, avoiding this worst-case outcome will be a principal task for US foreign policy in the years ahead.

5 A rising China and American perturbations

Hugh White and Brendan Taylor

The 'regional–global nexus' runs implicitly through the often dichotomous debates over China's (re-)emergence and its broader strategic implications. Not surprisingly given their privileging of the state as the primary unit of analysis in international politics (see, for example, Waltz [1979](#)), the voices of scholars of the realist/neo-realist persuasion have been particularly prominent in these debates. Many realists, for instance, argue that China will inevitably seek to convert its burgeoning economic and military power into regional (and conceivably even global) hegemonic status. The most prominent amongst these is John Mearsheimer, who follows the logic that 'the overriding goal of each state is to maximize its share of world power, which means gaining power at the expense of other states...[t]heir ultimate aim is to be the hegemon – that is, the only great power in the system' (Mearsheimer [2001](#): 2). In the policy world, similar realist proclivities are evident in portrayals of China as a 'strategic competitor' whose growing regional influence in Asia needs to be 'contained', with a view to preserving the current US-led world order (see, for example, Rice [2000](#)).

Many liberals, by contrast, see promise rather than peril in China's impressive economic growth. They see largely positive ramifications flowing from the fact that China is becoming increasingly enmeshed economically and engaged institutionally at both the regional and global levels. Liberals contend, for example, that China's economic resurgence has both created and is contingent upon interdependencies in its relations with the US, with its Asian neighbours and, indeed, in the context of the global economy as a whole. This, so the liberal argument goes, has the effect of dampening tendencies towards conflict as well as encouraging greater moderation in Chinese foreign policy more generally (Ikenberry [2008](#)). Liberals also see as beneficial the growing Chinese involvement in a raft of regional and global multilateral institutions which has occurred from the late 1990s onwards. They anticipate that this thickening web of institutional interactions will produce, over time, greater communication, mutual understanding and ultimately even a level of trust between China and the world (Lanteigne 2005).

Constructivist scholars go even further, contending that the socialisation

which occurs when institutions expose Chinese policy-makers to regional and global norms will ultimately lead to positive shifts in their underlying beliefs, interests and conceptions of China's national identity. A leading exponent of this view is Alastair Iain Johnston. In his recent study of China's participation in a selection of global and regional institutions during the period 1980–2000, Johnston concludes that ‘there is considerable, if subtle, evidence of the socialization of Chinese diplomats, strategists, and analysts in certain counter-realpolitik norms and practices as a result of participation in these institutions’ (Johnston [2008](#): xiv). In policy terms, both the liberal and the constructivist logic is reflected in characterisations of China as a country that is moving inexorably towards becoming a more ‘responsible stakeholder’ both globally and within its own Asian region (Zoellick [2005](#)). The ‘engagement’ of China, as opposed to the ‘containment’ which those of the realist persuasion will typically advocate, is therefore ultimately seen as a preferable policy approach by those of both the liberal and constructivist schools.

As the above demonstrates, the dominant intellectual approaches to problematising China's (re-)emergence illuminate various dimensions of the regional–global nexus. However, none of these theory-driven perspectives sets out to explicitly encapsulate the multidimensional, multidirectional impact of China's rise in driving this nexus between Asian security and global security. Indeed, due to the theoretical strictures they respectively self-impose, it remains questionable whether any of these paradigms is necessarily appropriate for fully capturing those complexities. As Aaron Friedberg has observed in his useful overview of the academic literature addressing US–China relations,

driven by a desire to construct parsimonious theories and to establish the preponderance of one paradigm or school, scholars have been inclined to adopt an all or nothing attitude, asserting the overwhelming importance of the causal mechanisms central to their preferred paradigm while downplaying or ignoring the possible significance of others.

(Friedberg [2005](#): 10)

Against that backdrop, this chapter seeks to illustrate more fully the multidimensional, multidirectional manner in which China's rise impacts upon the regional–global security nexus. This analysis will be conducted primarily through the lens of the US–China relationship, illuminating the

symbiotic manner in which future ties between these two geopolitical heavyweights will at once both condition and be conditioned by the nexus between Asian and global security.

China shakes the world

Of course Napoleon Bonaparte has been proved right: as China wakes, it is shaking the world. China's extraordinary transformation inescapably drives the nexus between Asian security and global security. This is because the rise of China poses the biggest challenge to the maintenance of the remarkable global order that emerged in the last decades of the twentieth century and which has so far shaped the new century so decisively. The core of that order is a set of strategic relationships between the world's most powerful states which are largely free of overt strategic competition. This high degree of major power amity – arguably unprecedented in history – has been fundamental to many aspects of the current global order, including economic growth, environmental action, political evolution and effective collective responses to non-state, sub-state and rogue-state security challenges. Failure to sustain this order would therefore have severe implications in many areas unrelated to ‘traditional’ security conceived in terms of major power relations. However, an equally strong case can also be advanced that any collapse of the present order, and a consequent return to a more historically typical set of strategically competitive global major power relationships, would do more than simply complicate the management of many contemporary security concerns: it would overshadow those concerns with a return to the risks of major power conflict on the scale of those that convulsed much of the last century.

Asia is the region in which the current global order will face its most profound challenge, because Asia is where the relationships between major powers are under the greatest strain. Asia is also the region where power relationships are shifting fastest and most conspicuously. The emergence in China and India of countries with over one billion people each now moving towards OECD levels of per capita income, for instance, constitutes a quite unprecedented phenomenon. In time, India's trajectory could well prove even more remarkable than China's, particularly should its population overtake China's by the middle of the century, as current projections anticipate (Bell [2005](#): 5). Certainly by mid-century the relationship between Beijing and New

Delhi seems likely to be amongst the most important relationships in the world. However, for the next few decades, it will be China's rise that poses the greatest challenge to the global order, and that challenge will need to be negotiated successfully first, before India's power moves to centre-stage. Indeed, failure to accommodate the global order to the rise of China could conceivably even forestall India's rise by destroying the political and strategic harmony necessary for sustained globalised economic growth.

China's growth over the past three decades has been, without question, a spectacular example of national economic growth. Yet there remains a strong tendency to view China's current economic success in the same way as its first steps towards prosperity were perceived during the 1980s. At that time, China appeared something of a temporary anomaly. Many viewed it as an experiment – a communist country taking on the trappings of market economics without really understanding them, and without having developed the liberal political system which was generally regarded as essential to sustained economic growth. However, China has now been growing successfully for approximately thirty years. Its economy has now been operating on market lines for longer than it was run on communist command principles. To be sure, it has had to overcome gargantuan challenges to sustain that growth. However, it is no longer an experiment: the Chinese Communist Party has adopted key principles underlying the management of market economics.

China challenges America

China's economic growth challenges the global order because it challenges American economic primacy, and therefore threatens American strategic primacy – initially in Asia; later, perhaps, globally. The implications of the rise of China for the global strategic order over coming years and decades will depend primarily on the future of the US–China relationship in the face of these challenges. Those implications will play out primarily within Asia and will affect global security through their consequences for the Asian regional order. However, there are also circumstances in which developments outside Asia may affect the evolution of the US–China relationship in Asia, and hence through that take on wider global significance.

At the heart of these complexities lies a relatively straightforward question: can the US and China sustain a peaceful and cooperative relationship if

China's power continues to seriously challenge that of America? For a stable relationship to be sustained, at least one of two things will need to transpire. Either the US will need to yield voluntarily or dilute its position of primacy in Asia and share power with China. Or China will need to accept a position of continued political and strategic subordination to the US, even as America's relative economic power declines. Whilst neither of these options is impossible, neither seems particularly likely.

The latter possibility appears especially remote. To be sure, China has benefited enormously from the US-led regional and global order of recent decades, and it has been successful in exploiting that order for its own purposes. As long as the US-led order serves China's interests, Beijing will more than likely continue to support that order. However, such support will prove more difficult to secure as China's power grows. The closer China approaches parity with American economic power, the harder it will be for Beijing to accept the political and strategic limits that the US-led order requires China to respect. The less that order appears to serve China's interests, the more it will affront Chinese ambitions and expectations. From a Chinese perspective the issue will not be whether China remains a status quo power or becomes a revisionist one: it will be whether US primacy is essential to the status quo or whether it can and should be replaced by a more equal sharing of authority and responsibility in Asia. For the Chinese there can be only one answer.

The potential for a more equal sharing of authority and responsibility between China and the US is already evident in a number of areas (for further reading see Glaser and Liang [2008](#)). Beijing and Washington, for example, were joint architects of the Six Party Talks process, which has thus far emerged as the primary vehicle for managing the protracted North Korean nuclear crisis. They have continued to assume leading roles in this process, with China playing host and the US State Department's dogged diplomacy ensuring the survival of the Six Party Talks framework (see, for example, Cossa [2007b](#)). Likewise, in contrast to the staunchly pro-Taiwanese statements of the early George W. Bush administration, Beijing and Washington appear to have moved increasingly towards joint management of the notoriously difficult cross-strait flashpoint. Some commentators have even suggested the existence of a quid pro quo arrangement between the US and China, with Beijing agreeing to rein in the Kim Jong-Il regime in exchange for Washington's agreement to do the same *vis-à-vis* the Taiwanese

leadership (see, for example, Sutter [2004](#)).

In practice, however, converting such glimmers of hope into a more durable US–China *modus vivendi* will not be straightforward. Neither Washington nor Beijing has any deep historical experience of operating along such lines. For the US, in particular, much is at stake: its claims to global leadership and its hopes for a new ‘American Century’ depend on it sustaining primacy in Asia, and hence its domination of China. This threat is sharpened by the fact that China's rise challenges not only America's position in Asia and the world, but America's view of itself as a country whose economic and strategic pre-eminence is a result of special, and uniquely American, virtues. For Washington to accept that it needs to recognise the legitimacy of China's growing power and reach an accommodation with it would require Americans to concede something very important not just about the relative quantity of American power, but also about its absolute quality: the idea that American power is different from that of other countries, because America itself is different (for further reading, see Mead [2003](#)). In short, accommodation with China goes against the grain of American exceptionalism, which is so deep-seated in almost every element of American strategic thought.

At a more concrete level, accommodation with China poses deep policy dilemmas for Washington, especially in relation to Japan. The US–Japan alliance is essential to America's primacy in Asia, and the US must sustain that alliance if it is to respond effectively to the Chinese challenge. However, Japan's anxiety about China's growing power makes it highly sensitive to the tone of US–China relations. Japan will only continue to rely on the US alliance for its security if it is confident that the US will continue to value that relationship in ways that correlate with Tokyo's own apprehension about Chinese power. Any serious questioning of the American commitment would see Tokyo draw back from the alliance and become more strategically self-reliant. In order to maintain primacy, therefore, the US must preserve the alliance, and to do that the US must not be too accommodating to China. This makes it difficult to manage the kind of ‘hedging strategy’ that American policy-makers are so fond of articulating: the need to preserve the US alliance with Japan, which will be essential if the relationship with China goes sour, prevents it from making the requisite accommodation with Beijing that would be needed to prevent it from turning sour (Medeiros [2005–6](#)).

None of this makes strategic competition, discord or conflict between the

US and China inevitable. Both countries have immense interests in a mutually beneficial economic relationship without which neither can sustain their economic growth and hence their strategic weight. China's continued economic growth, for instance, remains heavily contingent upon foreign investment and technology, while approximately 40 per cent of its exports are shipped to the US. Similarly, as a result of Chinese exports, US consumers enjoy access to a wide range of cheap imports which, according to Morgan Stanley, have saved them approximately US\$100 billion during the period since 1978 (cited in Gilboy [2004](#)). US firms have saved hundreds of millions of dollars each year buying lower-cost parts from countries such as China. China is now the fourth largest market for US exports, the largest source of US imports and the second largest buyer of US treasury bonds (Shaplen and Laney [2007](#): 84–5). Moreover, China's continued growth remains a somewhat stabilising factor in an increasingly fragile global economy. In short, both Beijing and Washington clearly have no shortage of incentives to negotiate a new relationship that reflects the emerging new realities of their economic power, as well as their respective political and strategic expectations.

If decisions on both sides of the Pacific were governed by economic self-interest, there would be no doubt that a satisfactory accommodation could be reached. However, they may not be, for the reasons sketched in the preceding paragraphs. While one should not be fatalistic regarding the prospects for a successful transition to a stable new order in Asia, complacency is equally dangerous. The critical issue here is not so much a matter of whether anyone in either Beijing or Washington is foolish enough to seek confrontation, but whether everyone on both sides is sufficiently prudent to avoid it. This task is complicated by the scale of the adjustments that are needed to the way that the US and China interact, and by reluctance, especially in the US, to come to terms with the need to effect changes at all.

If a serious breakdown in US–Sino relations were to occur, it could emerge abruptly or gradually. It could erupt quickly, at any time, if a crisis in Asia over Taiwan, or over conflicting maritime claims between Japan and China, brought American and Chinese forces into combat. Such a war would be nothing short of catastrophic given its potential to destroy the basis for a cooperative relationship between the US and China for decades to come. Moreover, it is worth reflecting on the consequences of a US–China conflict over Taiwan on patterns of trade and investment between the two countries, and the consequences of those disruptions for the regional and global

economies. The consequences for international stability would be nothing short of disastrous. As two respected American strategic analysts have recently estimated, were a conflict to occur between the US and China over the issue of Taiwan it would likely involve 'more than 1.5 billion people and a fundamental change in the international order' (Bush and O'Hanlon [2007](#): 12).

Alternatively, the relationship could sour gradually, if a series of small decisions on both sides unintentionally led to a mutually reinforcing sense of hostility. Much that is presently taken for granted about the progress of globalisation in the post-Cold War era would come into question under such a scenario. The source of this risk is not so much that the Sino-American relationship might deteriorate because of competition over clearly defined economic or political interests, as that a more deep-seated, less rational, sense of national competition between them over primacy in Asia could colour their approach to a whole range of events and issues, making these appear in zero-sum terms to both sides. In this regard, the relationship between global issues and regional dynamics is especially critical, with differences over issues at the global level potentially contributing markedly to a growing sense of regional adversarial competition between China and the US.

Global elements in regional competition

For decades to come, China's strategic challenge to the US will remain largely focused on Asia. China is not yet within reach of being able to contest America's global preponderance in the capacity to project and sustain military power. Although its military capabilities are certainly improving, China's military modernisation efforts started from an extremely low base. China's almost non-existent response to the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, for instance, has been interpreted as a contemporary illustration of just how limited these military capabilities remain. So too has the fact that China's contributions to UN peacekeeping operations continue to take the form of engineering or support troops, rather than combat units. As the respected American defence analyst Phillip Saunders ([2006](#): 29) has recently observed, 'China's ambitious military modernization efforts are likely to improve the PLA's [People's Liberation Army] capability to project power globally, but this will be a gradual, long-term process.'

For a variety of other reasons, any Chinese march to global superpower

status will inevitably be a very long one. It is important here not to underestimate the raft of domestic challenges with which China continues to grapple, such as coping with rapid urbanisation, the growing gap between rich and poor, maintaining public order, managing environmental degradation and the growing risk of water shortages, as well as negotiating many of the difficulties created by an ageing population (Shirk [2007](#): 1–34). While analyses pointing to the ‘coming collapse of China’ are nowhere near as fashionable today as was the case only a few years ago (see Lampton [2005](#)), these substantial challenges remain and the strong domestic focus they will almost certainly necessitate will limit Beijing's capacity to pose a global security challenge to the United States.

By comparison, and notwithstanding the ongoing difficulties that American forces continue to encounter in Iraq, the US remains the dominant power globally by all material indicators. This dominance is most apparent in terms of the military assets at its disposal. The Bush administration certainly made no secret of its ambitions to cement and possibly even to extend this dominance with a view to dissuading potential adversaries from pursuing military build-ups aimed at equalling or surpassing the US. While debate rages within China itself over how to respond to American primacy, few dispute it as a fact of international life. As Rosemary Foot ([2006](#): 84) states, ‘what ties these divergent views together is an acknowledgement that China has to accept the fact of unipolarity. Many strongly resent this feature of the current global order, but even the most resentful see the need to find a way of living with it.’

In Asia, by contrast, China's challenge to the US is already substantial and is gaining momentum at a rate faster than many anticipated. As has been the case for several years, the central preoccupation of the Chinese military still remains the development of military options to deter moves by Taiwan towards formal independence, to compel by force (if required) the reunification of Taiwan with the mainland and to prevent third-party intervention in a Taiwan straits contingency. However, the acquisition of a range of new systems including *Kilo*-class submarines, *Sovremenny* destroyers, air-to-air refuelling technology for its jet fighters and the proposed building of an aircraft carrier is also improving China's capacity to deploy forces along its maritime periphery (Frost, Przystup and Saunders [2008](#): 4). This potentially constitutes the beginnings of a major shift in Asia's strategic balance, because for decades, indeed centuries, Western strategic

primacy in Asia has been based on Western maritime domination of the Western Pacific.

In economic terms, China's regional influence is also on the rise. In 2004, for instance, China overtook the US to become South Korea's leading trading partner. In 2007, it repeated that feat *vis-à-vis* Japan and also overtook Japan to become Australia's leading trading partner (Shaplen and Laney [2007](#): 83). The real significance of these statistics lies in the fact that all three of these countries are prominent American strategic allies in Asia. Chinese regional penetration in Southeast Asia – where China continues to run substantial trade deficits with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) – is also widely known (Ravenhill [2006a](#)). Indeed, while the volume of Chinese trade with East Asia as a whole increased significantly during the period 1996–2006, the share of Chinese exports going to that region actually fell from 34 per cent to 24 per cent during the space of that decade (Frost, Przystup and Saunders [2008](#): 3). These economic shifts and the patterns of dependence they have generated constitute a valuable source of potential Chinese influence in Asia.

However, it is in the diplomatic realm that China's regional influence has made the greatest leaps forward. Little more than a decade ago perceptions of a looming 'China threat' were relatively widespread throughout Asia (see, for example, Yee and Storey [2002](#)). These perceptions were undoubtedly fuelled by episodes such as China's 1995 seizure of Mischief Reef in the South China Sea and the 1995–6 Taiwan straits crisis. China's deep scepticism for multilateral activities also limited Beijing's opportunities to interact with its Asian neighbours and to alleviate these fears. Contrast this with the situation today, where China has become an active participant in most if not all of Asia's major multilateral groupings. It has enunciated a 'New Security Concept' embodying principles of peaceful coexistence and has sought to introduce a form of 'new diplomacy' which emphasises a kinder, gentler and more nuanced approach to foreign affairs (Medeiros and Fravel [2003](#)). The implementation of this vision has been aided by the fact that China's most able diplomats are consistently now posted to Asia (Frost, Przystup and Saunders [2008](#): 4). Hence, while residual fears of an impending 'China threat' certainly remain in many Asian capitals, Beijing has done a remarkable job to assuage many of these apprehensions in a relatively short space of time. As Alice Ba ([2005](#): 96) has observed with particular reference to Southeast Asia:

The 1990s ended on a different note than the one on which it began. In particular, ASEAN-China relations experienced a dramatic increase in exchanges involving new economic opportunities, new functional cooperation, a new Chinese foreign policy, new economic initiatives, and changing attitudes on both sides. Indeed, what has taken place is no less than a major sea change in relations.

American policy-makers, however, tend not to see the China challenge in these terms. Instead, they focus on China as a global player, and conceive the emerging competition with China as a global contest. The Pentagon's 2007 annual report to Congress on Chinese military power, for instance, characterises China as 'a regional political and economic power with global aspirations' (US Department of Defense [2007](#): executive summary). The 2006 *Quadrennial Defense Review* is even more explicit, suggesting that China is the state with 'the greatest potential to compete militarily with the United States and field disruptive military technologies that could over time offset traditional US military advantages absent US counter strategies' (US Department of Defense [2006b](#): 29). This is understandable: America is a global power and thinks most naturally in global terms. It is a country which has long sought out global rivals against which to define itself. Moreover, the defining experience of the current generation of American policy-makers was the Cold War, which was a genuinely global competition.

There is a natural and quite understandable tendency to view a new era of strategic competition with China in the same way. This, however, can lead to miscalculations on America's part, through an underestimation of China's competitive potential. American strategists tend to evaluate Chinese power against a global benchmark, and they see a state with no real capacity to challenge American capacity to project armed force and apply strategic weight beyond their own region. They tend to overlook the fact that China does not need to challenge the US globally in order to erode US primacy in Asia – it needs only to compete in its own backyard. And this is what China is effectively doing. The result is a mismatch of perceptions between Beijing and Washington about their relative power. China is confident of its capacity to compete with the US in Asia, while the US is reassured that China poses no major challenge globally. It is from such differences in perception that strategic miscalculations can often arise (see Jervis [1976](#)).

Moreover, the perception of China as an aspiring global competitor tends to lead American strategists to interpret Chinese actions beyond Asia in ways

that make them appear more threatening than they perhaps really are – and in the process fuelling that sense of strategic competition which is growing between Beijing and Washington, and therefore making a more adversarial relationship harder to avoid in the long run. For example, US interpretations of Chinese policy in African trouble-spots such as Zimbabwe and Sudan can suggest that China is deliberately seeking to oppose US-led initiatives and approaches in a zero-sum competition for influence in Africa (see, for example, Saunders [2006](#): 1–2). It seems just as probable, however, that aside from seeking to limit Taiwanese diplomatic initiatives, Chinese motives are more narrowly commercial – simply a search for raw materials, investment opportunities and export markets.

American anxieties about Chinese economic activity in places like Africa and the Middle East would appear to be driven by a species of mercantilism, seeing states competing for markets, raw materials and political influence in the developing world much as the nineteenth-century colonial empires did – or, at times, as the largely separate economic systems of the West and the Eastern bloc did during the Cold War (Mastanduno [1992](#)). Nowhere is this more apparent than in relation to energy. In recent years it has become commonplace to describe competition for access to secure energy supplies as one of the key engines of political strategic competition between major powers – and especially between the US and China (see, for example, Zha and Hu [2007](#): 105). Chinese policy in the Middle East, for example, is often seen as driven by hopes to secure access to Middle East energy at the expense of the US. Accordingly, many have seen an imperative for Washington to respond by locking in American access to important sources of imported energy, shutting out China in the process.

Such interpretations do not stand up to closer scrutiny. As long as the global economy continues to work in the manner it currently does, both China and the US rely upon one another's economy being able to function effectively. Far from there being a zero-sum competition for access to energy between Beijing and Washington, therefore, the reverse is true – deep reciprocal interdependence. Both the US and China now rely on the other so heavily for their prosperity that each has a major interest in ensuring that the other has the energy it needs to keep working and growing. Energy shortages for one would be catastrophic for the other.

Against that backdrop, provided a relatively open global market continues to function, energy resources will be allocated by the market. Moreover, in a

competitive world, over the long term, importers like the US and China cannot afford to pay more than the market price for their energy, and the sellers cannot afford to sell for less. Accordingly, the real danger here is not that competition over access to resources such as oil will drive strategic competition between the US and China. It is much more likely that a growing sense of strategic competition – which contributes to, rather than being caused by, growing mercantilism – will slowly undermine the sense of shared and interdependent interests that upholds the global market and usher in a new era of mercantilism, to everyone's loss. In other words, competition over energy resources will be a result rather than a cause of increased strategic competition.

There is one aspect of energy security, however, which may become a focus of strategic competition between the US and China beyond Asia, and hence contribute to an increasingly adversarial tone in their relationship: the security of China's seaborne energy in the event of a strategic standoff or crisis with the US. Beijing is acutely aware that in the event of a US–China crisis in Asia over an issue like Taiwan, the US could potentially threaten to obstruct Chinese seaborne trade, especially energy imports. Perhaps equally worrying, India has the capacity to do the same against the vital sea lanes of the Indian Ocean. Beijing is therefore already giving serious consideration to ways to reduce this vulnerability. It has two options. One is to build naval forces able to secure Chinese energy imports as they travel from the Middle East and Africa. This would be enormously demanding, and would require China to build much larger, more capable and longer-range maritime forces than it has yet developed. Nothing in China's very impressive air and naval build-up in recent years appears to indicate that it has any military-strategic ambitions or intentions beyond the Asian region, and indeed beyond China's own extended maritime approaches in the Western Pacific. Building forces to defend oil imports in the Indian Ocean would be a different matter entirely, for such forces would also have the capacity to mount a more general challenge to US global maritime primacy. In a classic security dilemma, steps by China to defend its global energy sea lines of communication (SLOCs) could end up making it much less secure, by leading America to fear that it faced a global strategic rival.

Second, China could try to move its energy import routes from the sea, where they are vulnerable to the US Navy, onto land where the US would find them harder to interdict. For China this is a real possibility, because its

far western territories are close to the Middle East via Central Asia. The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation has provided China with an excellent means to build a strong political position among the republics in Central Asia through which energy supplies from the Gulf region would need to pass. However, geography dictates that to make this option viable China needs to develop close relations with Iran. There are signs that China is doing this. This too, however, carries great risks for US–China relations; Iran is such a neuralgic issue for the US, and is seen to pose such a serious threat to the US position in the Gulf, that efforts by China to build a close relationship with Iran would very likely be read by the US as a direct strategic challenge to vital American interests. Either way, efforts by China to secure its global energy SLOCs, even against India, could serve to intensify the sense of strategic competition between Beijing and Washington, and make the negotiation of a new stable major power order in Asia that much harder.

Conclusion

China's rise is an event of immense global significance, but not because China is yet becoming a contender for global primacy itself; it is because of the importance of China's relationship with the US. The evolution of the US–China relationship is likely to be the single most powerful political factor shaping the global security environment over coming decades. If the relationship develops in positive ways, there is good reason to believe that the world can continue to enjoy the peace and prosperity of recent decades. We argued earlier in this chapter that the realisation of a US–China *modus vivendi* in Asia represents the most logical route to achieving this outcome. However, we also identified a number of formidable obstacles to it.

If the US and China are indeed unable to reach such an accommodation, the world may face a darker future over the next few decades. The worst possible outcome would be armed conflict between them. Any such conflict would likely be protracted, inconclusive and bitter. Any hopes for a peaceful and prosperous region would be dashed in the process, resulting in a very new and different world with few good options. This is a sobering thought indeed. Alternatively, China may ultimately win the competition for regional influence in its own right and succeed in establishing an effective sphere of influence in Asia that significantly limits US power. Due to uncertainties over how a strong and unrestrained China would behave – it might, for instance,

seek to dominate the region politically, economically and even militarily – this would not necessarily be a good outcome for all in the region.

Short of these two more alarmist scenarios, China will not be a serious competitor with the US for full-spectrum global power for a long time to come. However, this chapter has identified two ways in which China's rise interacts with the global security outlook in a manner which may still be deeply significant. Both are driven by the challenge that China's growing power already poses to US primacy in Asia, and the risk that their relationship will become more adversarial as a result. On the one hand, an increasingly competitive strategic relationship between the US and China would not only have huge strategic implications for the rest of Asia, but also immense repercussions globally, especially for the global economy. The importance of the US–China economic relationship specifically, and of Asia generally, in the global economy over coming decades suggests that the economic disruption in Asia that would be caused by a US–China crisis would have profound global economic consequences, on a scale that could also carry important strategic implications. On the other hand, events on the global stage outside Asia will affect the development of the US–China relationship, in at least two ways. First, the growing US *perception* of China as a global competitor will lead the US to interpret Chinese economic and political engagement beyond Asia as strategically competitive, thus intensifying the sense that the relationship is becoming more adversarial, and sharpening their differences over the future power balance in Asia itself. Second, Chinese efforts to reduce the vulnerability of its energy SLOCs to military pressure from the US or others may lead it to take political and military steps which will easily be seen by Washington as directly challenging vital American interests.

Against that backdrop, Americans often imply that the decisions that will shape future US–China relations are essentially China's to make (Zoellick [2005](#)). However, America also needs to decide whether to accept the legitimacy of China's claim to a leadership role in the region, with all that it implies for America's place in this part of the world, and indeed the global structure. This is not to suggest that Beijing doesn't also have critical choices to make. What it does indicate is that America's choices will shape and frame China's in vital ways. In the final analysis, it is largely up to America, as the stronger power, to make the first move. Yet there is thus far little evidence to suggest that America is thinking in this manner. As such, while conflict

between the US and China is far from inevitable, the path to a stable global and regional power balance looks far from easy at this juncture.

Part II

6 Hegemony, hierarchy and order

Evelyn Goh

Introduction

What can we usefully say about the interplay between ‘global’ and ‘regional’ security structures and dynamics? How does our understanding of the regional–global security nexus help us to analyse the Asian security order and to make projections about future prospects? These two questions guide the discussion in this chapter.¹

Over the last fifteen years, Asia has experienced greater regionalism in economic and strategic terms than ever before. One might even argue that the development of a new regional power balance sustained by the balancing and engagement strategies of key regional players such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has intensified. In the course of these multilateral efforts, China has become an increasingly central component of the regional order-building process, both because of its increasing economic and military strengths, and as a result of its growing political and institutional influence. Because such positionality has been established in what is the world's wealthiest and arguably its most dynamic region, that country has arguably become the United States’ most likely ‘peer competitor’ for the remainder of this century. China's growing power effectively thrusts the Asia-Pacific into a central position to affect the future course of international security.

In this context, the ‘global’ dimension of security is often thought about in terms of the interjection of wider US interests into this geopolitically vital region, juxtaposed against a ‘rising China’. How these two factors interact will be central to how the global security environment will be constituted and the Asia-Pacific's future role in that process.

This chapter thus adopts a region-centric analysis because it accepts the cardinal assumption that Asia-Pacific security politics, and China's part in determining it, will constitute an increasingly central aspect of international security. The starting point, however, is that the US is not the ‘extra-regional’ player that regionally indigenous states often assume it to be: it is at once a global superpower *and* a regional hegemon whose strategic interests and engagement constitute (not merely shape or define) the East Asian regional

security order. Notwithstanding its difficulties in Iraq, the US still projects dominant material and ideational power attributes in East Asia. It has a defining military presence there, in the form of forward military deployment and bilateral alliances. It remains a top trading partner and investor for all the countries in the region. It wields very significant normative influence throughout the Asia-Pacific in terms of diplomacy, education and popular culture. Its technological prowess remains unparalleled across the board. Although China and other Asian actors are working hard to narrow the gap in these sectors, the sheer scale and dynamism underwriting American primacy will not be surpassed over the near term.

However, the nature of American hegemony in East Asia, like US global hegemony, is not imperial. The relative acceptance of (or at least lack of sustained direct challenge to) US preponderance suggests a hierarchic system with the US at the apex but with discernible layers of other regional powers underneath. Since 1945, China has increasingly claimed a position in the second layer as regional great power, while Japan and India can, in more recent years, be seen to occupy positions in a third layer of regional major powers. South Korea and ASEAN constitute the fourth tier. North Korea is outside the hierarchic system but affects it due to its military prowess and nuclear weapons capability. While the now defunct Soviet Union represented a global and regional systemic challenger to the United States during the Cold War, it was never really accepted as an Asian player, principally because it could not offer a viable alternative to Western economic resources.² Russia today might presently be viewed as an ‘oscillating force’ within the spectrum but more a factor in the Central Asian strategic setting than in East Asia where it has only the sale of military weapons systems and possibly energy supplies to offer a region that has historically viewed it as a marginal player. The now defunct Soviet Union was, of course, a global and regional system challenger to the US. It was, however, never really accepted as an integral or legitimate Asian player.

Key developments in the Asian regional security order since 1945 can be explained by the stability and instability in this hierarchy. They can also be understood through regional players’ attempts to manage strategic shifts and to reconstitute a preferred postwar regional hierarchy. This formulation of US hegemony as regional hierarchy helps to overcome the problem of oversimplification faced by a levels of analysis treatment of the interaction between the ‘global’ and ‘regional’ dimensions of security. At the same time,

it reinforces the view that the key to the global–regional nexus is the United States’ role and position.

In the Asian context, global and regional security interrelate in the way China and the US will regard the implications of each other’s strategies and actions globally for their positions within the regional hierarchy, and the impacts of each other’s regional activities and challenges on their positions in the global system. For instance, China’s startling economic growth that needs to be fuelled by ever-expanding international energy conduits and the gradual expansion of its strategic capabilities in ‘niche areas’ such as solid-fuelled mobile ballistic missile technology and anti-satellite capabilities all have ramifications for its positionality on a global scale. American responses to these factors and capabilities will, in turn, spill over to affect US relations with various players on an inter-regional basis. In this sense, it is worth focusing on the ‘regional–global security nexus’ more specifically.

The regional–global security nexus

The interplay between regional and global security is an interesting avenue of scholarly enquiry, but one that cannot provide simple formulations. At the outset, it is essential to note that, for any analyst or policy-maker working from an essentially region-centric perspective, all ‘global’ issues are rendered ‘regional’. In Asia, this is partly because of the presence of so many great powers, but it is also due more fundamentally to what David Braybrooke and Charles Lindblom ([1963](#)) have termed ‘bounded rationality’: all leaders and policy-makers filter global issues through the lenses of ‘national interest’, and the exigencies of security in their immediate neighbourhood. Or, as Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver ([2003](#): 4) have put it, ‘since most threats travel more easily over short distances than over long ones, security interdependence is normally patterned into regionally based clusters’, or regional security complexes.

That such is the case cannot excuse us from considering what ‘global’ security is and what a ‘global’ security issue looks like. Global security is traditionally the concern of those structuralists in international relations who focus on systemic forces. Hence we see, for instance, the neo-realist’s focus on power distribution and polarity, and conditions of anarchy or hierarchy. If we agree that US hegemony is a defining element of the global security structure, then these suppositions apply. If we challenge the relative weight of

US hegemony, then we must describe a more complex global security situation populated by a plethora of power actors ranging from other major states, to the United Nations Security Council, to multinational corporations and non-governmental organisations. Absence of US systemic primacy leads to global security issues comprising a far more hotly contested terrain. The difficulties of reconciling these multiple actors and interests with systemic forces account for why so many scholars and policy-makers prefer to adopt, as the defining systemic feature of the post-Cold War global security order, US unipolarity or hegemony. Admittedly, changes in the US capability for applying material assets decisively and effectively brought about by fighting an unsuccessful conflict in Iraq could lead to monumental structural changes. At present, however, no credible challenger – China still lags far behind, especially in technological terms – is able to supplant US primacy. Contemporary global security for now is synonymous with how US power is applied to the management of international security relations.

Global security issues are even more problematic. These ought to be issues that affect a significant proportion of the globe, but by this definition, only a handful of issues qualify: nuclear weapons with the potential of creating a holocaust, global climate change and rapidly communicable diseases. In practice, ‘global security issues’ tend to be those issues that the hegemon or other major powers define as of overwhelming interest to them in security terms and thus worthy of the expenditure of significant resources, such as international terrorism post-11 September or nuclear proliferation by ‘rogue states’ such as North Korea or Iran.

Turning to regional security, definitions of ‘regional’ may also be contentious. For Asia, one major impediment to interrogating the regional–global security nexus is the unresolved debate and tension about regional membership. What defines ‘belonging to a region’? Is geographical territorial control vital?³ For our purposes, the main problem is the common acceptance of the claim that the US is an ‘extra-regional’ actor. Yet, there is no clear, territorially contiguous and internally cohesive unit recognisable as ‘Asia’ or ‘East Asia’ that is easily distinguishable from neighbouring units. The mixed use of ‘Asia’, ‘Asia-Pacific’ and ‘East Asia’ in a volume of essays like this one is indicative of the fact that regions are ‘fluid and complex mixtures of physical, psychological, and behavioral traits that are continually in the process of being re-created and redefined’ by socio-political actors and processes (Pempel [2005](#): 4).

In security terms, regionalism in Asia has been driven at the state level; indeed, regionalism in Asia stems fundamentally from the security concerns of key states (see, for instance, Acharya and Goh [2007](#); Goh [2007a](#)). Asian definitions of regional security have had two main characteristics. First, Asian states subscribe to a comprehensive view of national security that aims not only at preventing external military hostility, but also at fostering socio-economic development to ensure internal ‘resilience’. Thus they share a strong conviction that economic growth is a critical means of ensuring regime legitimacy and fostering regional security through national development and regional interdependence (for a good elaboration, see Alagappa [1988](#)). This is a broader approach to regional security than classical Western Clausewitzian or legalistic approaches. Second, they have developed regional norms on security cooperation that stem from the legacy of decolonisation, and are targeted at safeguarding sovereign identity and prerogatives within a commonly understood territorial frame of reference. Thus, for instance, the Chinese and Indian ‘five principles of peaceful coexistence’ are incorporated into most key working documents of major regional security groupings, such as ASEAN's Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC), which also governs the ASEAN Regional Forum and the East Asian community processes.⁴

However, Asian security regionalism has also been constituted by other forces. The notions of ‘East Asia’, ‘Southeast Asia’ and ‘South Asia’ stemmed in part from designations of operational theatres in wartime by the imperial powers. Subsequently, the US role further consolidated the East Asian security complex through its postwar San Francisco alliance system, and helped to expound the notion of an ‘Asia-Pacific’ region in part to legitimise its own membership in a broader Asian region. At the same time, the US superpower has been and remains the factor that every regional actor has to take into account, and to whose potential actions and preferences everyone else must pay attention. Crucially, it is treated as an integral regional security factor by all regional players, in spite of occasional anti-American rhetoric. Thus the US at once operates as a ‘global’ actor with wide-ranging global strategic reach and vision to its national strategies; and as a ‘regional’ actor with Asia-centric strategies that hopefully, though not always, feed into or derive from its global strategy.

US hegemony and the East Asian hierarchy

US involvement has had a profound impact on this history of East Asia's development. America maintained an 'open-door' to China, twice transformed Japan, and spilt blood to hold the line against communism. The US constructed and maintained the post-World War II international order that allowed East Asia to flourish. America's victory in the Cold War and its technology driving the New Economy are continued influences. In the strategic sense, the US is therefore part of East Asia. It has been, and still is, a positive force for stability and prosperity.

(Goh Chok Tong [2001](#))

The challenge, then, is how to understand Asia's evolving security order without applying an overly polarising or simplistic means of explaining it only by equating the United States' global security interests with its Asian manifestations. What follows is an argument that while the US has consistently constituted regional order, many Asian security actors have also sought leverage on American power to maximise their own positionality and to influence the development of regional security architecture, identity and order.

While it is generally accepted that the US plays a critical role in East Asian security, there is no agreement on how the centrality of its position intersects with 'regional' strategic impulses. For instance, because American analysts are inclined to approach East Asian security with the primary purpose of explicating or recommending US regional strategy, they necessarily privilege Washington's regional position (for instance, Ikenberry and Mastanduno [2003b](#); Suh, Katzenstein and Carlson [2004](#)). In contrast, scholars working from a region-centric perspective stress the importance of 'indigenous' security dynamics, and argue, like Muthiah Alagappa ([2003](#)), that while the US is dominant in the region, it exercises only 'incomplete hegemony', because it cannot manage security in Asia by itself and needs the cooperation of other Asian powers (the term 'incomplete hegemony' comes from Mastanduno [2003](#)). While the latter contention is true, it still does not comprise a satisfactory account for the ways in which this American preponderance interacts with regional forces to define and shape regional security. What is the significance of US structural power in East Asia? Why do so many other regional powers choose to cooperate and align with the US, and support its national strategy and regional policies? How and to what extent is regional order predicated upon the US role and position? To answer these questions, I propose conceptualising the East Asian order in terms of a

regional hierarchy, constituted by US global and regional hegemony. This conception builds on David Kang's thesis that there is a historical tradition of hierarchical political relations in East Asia. However, it asserts that, in order to understand recent history, his propositions are more convincingly applied with a focus on the US rather than on China.

Arguing that East Asian states are not balancing against a rising China today because of the region's tradition of hierarchical relations, Kang explains that, prior to the intervention of Western powers, these states were used to a regional order under Chinese domination. China intervened little in their affairs, and so was perceived as a source of stability and benefit. He rejects the neo-realist notion that 'hierarchy' is the opposite of anarchy, and instead uses 'hierarchy' as shorthand for unequal relations amongst states, but short of hegemony or empire. Kang's key focus is on contemporary East Asian security, and the central premise that the region is more comfortable deferring to a strong China than others might think. This suggests that the US will not succeed in finding regional support for a balancing strategy against China, and that if the US withdraws from the region, these countries will most likely bandwagon with China (Kang [2003a](#)).

This interesting thesis leads to one key question: is this hierarchical propensity specific to Chinese domination, or is it a more generalisable tendency amongst states in a broader Asian security complex? How can we account for regional behaviour during periods when China is not dominant or in ascendance? What Kang proposes is a Sino-centric hierarchical system. If one focuses on East Asian security order in the post-1945 period more broadly, however, it is possible to suggest that the region has a more general tendency towards hierarchical modes of conduct – what I would term 'hierarchical deference'. Furthermore, this tradition was transposed into a context of US hegemony after the Second World War, with key states in East Asia accepting a US-centric regional hierarchical order.

The US has indisputably been the preponderant power in East Asia since 1945. Kang states that 'hierarchy is not hegemony', in that hierarchy is less overarching and intrusive and more focused on the interaction of states across the different levels of the hierarchy. However, his core variables for identifying a hierarchical system would apply strongly to the role of the US in East Asia after 1945. There are two key issues in hierarchy: (1) 'all nations [must] understand that the central state [has] no territorial or overweening ambitions'; and (2) there must be 'a method for resolving conflicts'. If these

conditions exist, then the other states acquiesce to the central state, because they know that ‘opposing the central state is impossible’, and yet feel secure that the expected costs of the central state conquering them would be higher than the benefits (Kang [2003b](#): 166). Throughout much of postwar Asia, the US has largely been acknowledged as the central, or dominant, state with no local territorial ambitions; apart from its key allies which institutionalise this benign view through treaties, unallied countries such as those in Southeast Asia and, more recently, India also see it as an honest broker and offshore balancer.⁵ The communist countries in the region which have experienced containment, subversion and invasion by US forces have good reason to disagree. But even China has accepted the idea of the US as a stabilising force in the region since the 1970s.⁶ Certainly, this is less controversial a claim than that made by Kang for China (see Acharya [2003/04](#): 154–7). The US has also been intimately involved in managing (if not actually solving) key regional conflicts in East Asia after 1945. During the Cold War, it intervened in hot wars and led in containing communism, and after the Cold War, it has been critical in managing the main regional conflicts on the Korean peninsula and across the Taiwan straits.⁷ Indirectly, it has provided a regional security umbrella which may have dampened or limited the regional effects of other bilateral or domestic conflicts, such as the South China Sea territorial disputes.⁸

Furthermore, the US record in East Asia since 1945 largely conforms to Kang's suggested regional strategic behavioural implications of hierarchy. First, the centrality of bandwagoning behaviour by the lesser states is clear: most of the main Asian states, with the partial exception of China, are either US allies or are cultivating closer security relations with Washington. As discussed below, even China today is not challenging but accommodating US interests in the region. Second, Kang posits that ‘a hierarchic system is more stable than a “Westphalian system” in good times, but more chaotic during bad times’ (Kang [2003b](#): 167).⁹ The following discussion will show that the Asian security order was most under threat when the US commitment to the region and thus its position at the top of the hierarchy was uncertain and/or challenged.

The pattern of Asian stability and instability since 1945 has been closely related to the certainty of the US position at the top of the hierarchical regional security order. Initially, in the 1945 to 1970 period, the US led a more straightforward Waltzian hierarchy (hegemony) with minor, though

increasingly salient challenges. After 1970, as China and the Soviet Union exerted more regional influence in the wake of the post-Vietnam American drawdown, US preponderance was challenged within a less stable hierarchical system with more activism across the intervening layers. After the end of the Cold War, Asia's security order has been moving towards the kind of hierarchy Kang defines, with smaller states trying to facilitate a hierarchic system underscored by US power.

Hegemony, 1945–1970

The US emerged from the Second World War as the world's greatest power: it had a gross national product three times that of Russia and more than five times that of Britain after the war; it held two-thirds of the world's gold reserves and three-quarters of its invested capital, and more than half the world's manufacturing capacity (Leffler [1992](#)). This status quo preponderance was, however, perceived to have been threatened by the USSR's ascension to superpower status, especially in terms of rising Soviet military influence in Eastern Europe and Northeast Asia. While postwar American efforts to rally against Soviet geopolitical aspirations were concentrated in Europe and the 'Northern Tier', it was the Korean War which marked the beginning of the use of military force to counter communist expansion on a global scale.¹⁰ The American decision to cross the 38th parallel was an attempt to secure preponderant power in East Asia, and establish a global containment posture against Moscow. China's entry into the Korean War launched its own quest to become a great power, and was, in American eyes, a corollary to Soviet expansionist aims to establish international communist domination and push back US power from key geostrategic strongpoints on the Eurasian continent.

The Korean War decisively opened up Asia as an enduring theatre of the Cold War, in which future American policy calculations would have to take into account China as well as the Soviet Union. Because of its dominant power, the US was able to throw a security cordon around China to contain Washington's growing fear of Asian revolution influenced by Chinese communists. This entailed primarily recognition and a commitment to the Republic of China on Taiwan, an early end to the occupation of Japan, a peace and security treaty granting American forces extensive base rights in the post-occupation period and American sponsorship of Japanese redevelopment. Washington also signed security pacts with the Philippines, New Zealand and Australia, and later entered into defensive treaties with the

Republic of Korea (ROK) (1953) and Taiwan (1954). The Southeast Asia Treaty Organization was also created (in late 1954) and comprised non-communist states within and outside the Asian region. Moreover, the US placed restrictions on European and Japanese economic relations with China (Schaller [1985](#): 294). In these ways, US strategy in the 1950s constituted the regional order at a time of postwar weakness of established East Asian states and decolonisation of new states. US relationships and actions all established a hierarchy with the US firmly at the top, as regional hegemon. The majority of lesser states in the region acknowledged US dominance and bandwagoned with it.

Challengers to US hegemony during this timeframe were the Soviet Union, China, North Korea and later the Indo-Chinese states. They formed a communist bloc that comprised part of a broad bipolar regional pattern of confrontation. Yet, American dominance in East Asia was sustained in the 1950s. This was seen especially in the offshore islands crises in the late 1950s, during which Chinese claims over islands near Taiwan met with little or no Soviet support, and the main incentive for Chinese restraint was the asymmetrical nuclear capability possessed by the US (see Chang [1990: chapter 4](#)). In the 1960s, the US continued its policy of active containment in East Asia in the form of growing intervention in the Vietnam conflict, culminating in air strikes and a land invasion in 1965. The application of this grand strategy to preserve US regional and global preponderance to Vietnam in the 1960s, however, revealed new constraints of American power in terms of the limits of US public tolerance for protracted and destructive warfare in a distant land against an ideological enemy.

Layered regional hierarchy, 1970–1990

The unwinnable war in Vietnam led to a transition period in East Asia marked by grave uncertainty about the global balance of power between the US and USSR, and about the stability of the regional hierarchy. In his 1969 Guam Doctrine, Richard Nixon declared a scaling-down of US global aspirations. The US was now a Pacific power with reservations; it had no intention of becoming directly involved again in any regional conflict in Asia, although it would support allies and friends with military assistance and diplomatic backing. Interpreted by Asian states as signalling the potential abandonment of American primacy in the region, these moves opened up room for more regional activism and balance of power politics for the first

time since the end of the Second World War.

At the global level, the bipolar superpower conflict underwent dramatic changes in the 1970s: Sino-Soviet strategic enmity intensified and China 'defected' from its alliance with the Soviet Union to a rapprochement and normalisation with the US. The US, meanwhile, sought a parallel détente with the Soviet Union. A strategic triangle thus emerged, with the US as the pivotal player enjoying relatively good relations with the other two. With the congruence between ideology and strategic affinity broken, the Cold War in Asia assumed an explicit realpolitik hue, focusing on state interests and capabilities within the regional context. Events in the 1970s and 1980s showed the intimate interaction between global and regional security. Détente for the US was a deterrence model which hoped to induce restraint on the part of all three powers.

In reality, however, US power competition with the Soviet Union and China helped loosen a regional ricochet of military balancing behaviour. The Sino-American rapprochement did not encourage Soviet conciliation, but heightened Soviet insecurity in a way which enlarged the scope of the Sino-Soviet security dilemma. One of the immediate Soviet reactions after the rapprochement was to encourage India to facilitate the break-up of Pakistan, a staunch ally of China. This forced the American 'tilt towards Pakistan' in 1971 in order to prevent India from destroying the Pakistani army and endangering China (for an account based on new documentary material, see Goh [2005a](#): 185–92). The Sino-Japanese rapprochement and Treaty of Peace and Friendship in 1978 further exacerbated the Soviet sense of isolation and encirclement. Moscow now saw itself as confronted in East Asia by an alliance of the most populous, most economically successful and most powerful states, without the buffer of a friendly China to make up for the traditionally loose Soviet Far Eastern commitment (Solomon [1982](#): 288–9). This in turn may have contributed to a more aggressive Soviet policy, such as the invasion of Afghanistan and the decision to support Vietnam (Yahuda [1996](#): 89). The Soviets granted Vietnam membership in Comecon (Council for Mutual Economic Assistance) and signed a formal friendship treaty with that Southeast Asian country in late 1978, which provided support for the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia. China, in turn, was emboldened by its normalised relationship with the US to attack Vietnam to 'teach it a lesson'. It could be argued that the Soviet Union showed restraint in not resorting, in turn, to force against China, but this may be explained by its preoccupation

with the Afghanistan invasion in the eventful year of 1979. This invasion prompted a more confrontational US policy towards the Soviet Union (see Ross [1993](#)). Thus by 1979, East Asia was polarised along the new faultline of the Sino-Soviet confrontation, which was reinforced by the breakdown of the Soviet–American détente. Without the direct intervention of the US, this pattern of conflict was much more local, centred on Indochina and regional powers.

With the exception of the Korean peninsula which remained divided along East–West lines, the most serious confrontations in East Asia in the 1980s were those between contiguous communist states: the Soviet Union against China, China against Vietnam, and Soviet-backed Vietnam against China-supported insurgents in Cambodia. Indochina could be seen as a regional communist subsystem operating on classic balance of power principles, based around Vietnam's bid for regional hegemony. The stalemate that materialised over the ensuing decade featured internationally isolated Vietnam depending upon the Soviet Union to sustain its dominant position in Cambodia while being confronted on the margins by resistance forces backed by China, the US and ASEAN.

Looking at the Asian region as a whole, on the other hand, the late 1970s and 1980s saw a relatively stable pro-Western power equilibrium: apart from Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, almost all the other countries in the region, including China, were tied into a Western alliance system in one way or another (Zagoria [1982](#): 3). Yet the US had receded as the central state in the regional order during this time. In South Asia, as a result of the 1971 war and Pakistani fragmentation, a strengthened India moved closer to the USSR by signing a bilateral Friendship Treaty. In East Asia, China (as a US partner) and Vietnam (with Soviet backing) became the key protagonists on the regional stage, while ASEAN also developed a greater role with its international diplomatic activism. During this unstable period, the regional hierarchy was in flux as the US withdrew from its hegemonic position, security dynamics became almost totally ‘regional’, and China and Vietnam jostled for position in the shifting hierarchical layers.

Reconstituting hierarchical order, 1990 onwards

It was the end of the Cold War, however, that brought about the most significant transition in the global and Asian regional orders. Globally, the US remained the only superpower with resources that outstripped those of

any other single state. In Asia, China's position continued to strengthen, as concerns grew about the potential decline of American strategic interest in the region. The 1990s were a decade in which regional actors became most prominent in arguably reconstituting the regional hierarchy, to manoeuvre the US firmly back into a position of regional primacy. The activism on the part of strategically less powerful regional states indicates to some degree the consensual nature of the preferred hierarchical order. This model of regional order coincides most closely with Kang's model, though with the difference that the US is the primary state, and that the regional security order resembles a more layered hierarchy.

The post-Cold War uncertainty about American commitment to Asia particularly affected Japan and Southeast Asia. Both reacted by trying to retain the dominant US military presence and its important economic and political influence in the region. After more than a decade of trade conflicts and bilateral tension over charges that it was freeriding on the US security guarantee, the deepening uncertainty surrounding US commitment to East Asia in the early 1990s could have undermined US–Japan relations. Instead, however, it led to US policy-makers rethinking and strengthening their strategic ties as Tokyo likewise chose to enhance its alliance with Washington.

The April 1996 Japan–US Joint Declaration on Security and the September 1997 Revised Guidelines for Japan–US Defense Cooperation allowed for the expansion of security cooperation, especially in supplies and services to ‘situations in areas surrounding Japan that will have an important influence on Japan's peace and security’.¹¹ This extended the Japanese Self-Defense Forces’ mandate beyond defending the home islands against direct attack, to more generally enhancing regional stability. More recently, after the 11 September terrorist attacks, the Japanese Diet passed an emergency law (in October 2001) that allowed the Japanese military to provide logistical support for the US and others in anti-terrorist missions, paving the way for Japan to provide support functions in campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq. These were decisions calculated to buttress the Japanese alliance with the US, and to assure the continuity of US commitment to national and regional security in spite of changing strategic circumstances (see Katzenstein and Okawara 2004). This intensification of the US–Japan alliance critically helps to underwrite the United States’ position as the central state in the regional hierarchy in two ways: it enhances US power projection both in the region

and in the world; and it reaffirms the acquiescence of the main potential challenger for regional hegemony to US domination.¹²

Due to their peripheral location and relative lack of strategic importance to the US, most Southeast Asian states were even more concerned about a potential American withdrawal after the Cold War in the face of a rising China. Much has been written about Southeast Asian policies of engagement with China to mediate the China threat (see, for instance, Ba [2003](#): 630–8; Goh [2007b](#); Shambaugh [2004/05](#)). At the same time, however, they have tried selectively to harness the superior US force in the region to deter potential aggression from China. Two Southeast Asian states – the Philippines and Thailand – are formal allies of the US, but neither plays host to American bases. Instead, they and a number of non-allied countries, including Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia, provide military facilities and access to US naval and air forces. They also participate in bilateral and multilateral joint exercises with US forces, and some countries have preferential military supply relations with the Americans (for details, see Goh [2007/08](#)). By additionally tying themselves more closely to the United States in the short to medium-term fight against terrorism, these countries hope also to be able to help anchor the United States in the region as a counterweight to China (Goh [2005b](#): 30–2; Khong [2004](#): 203). Rather than encouraging the US to target its forces directly against China, though, the goal is to further buttress American military superiority in the region, or to demonstrate the ability to harness it in ways required to act as a general deterrence to Chinese (or other) aggression.¹³ In applying these ‘soft’ balancing policies, Southeast Asian states seek to deter indirectly potential Chinese aggression or domination by facilitating a continued US military preponderance in the region. At the same time, they also seek to strengthen their individual military capabilities by attracting US military aid and training, trade and economic assistance.

In addition to helping to consolidate US preponderance, ASEAN's engagement activities also indirectly facilitate the creation of a layered regional hierarchy. For instance, ASEAN's efforts at developing closer economic relations, generating more sustained political/security dialogue, and establishing military exchanges and relationships, are aimed not only at China, but also at the US, as well as other major regional players such as Japan, South Korea and India. By enmeshing the US, China and other large powers into regional institutions and norms, Southeast Asian states want to

involve them actively in the region by means of good political relationships, deep and preferential economic exchanges, and some degree of defence dialogue and exchange. Southeast Asian policy-makers believe that this creates greater long-term stability in the region (see Acharya [2003](#)). The aim is not to produce a multipolar balance of power in the conventional sense, because the major powers involved here are not all equally formidable. Rather, many Southeast Asian countries prefer to retain the United States as the preponderant superpower, with China as the regional great power, and India and Japan as second-tier regional powers (see Goh 2007/08).

Regional–global dynamics and the East Asian security order

Conceiving of the US role in East Asia as the primary or central state in the regional hierarchy clarifies three sets of critical questions about how the East Asian security order relates to the global security structure and dynamics.

First, it contributes to explaining the lack of sustained challenges to American global preponderance after the end of the Cold War. Three of the key potential global challengers to US unipolarity originate in Asia (China, India and Japan), and their support for, or acquiescence to, US dominance have helped stabilise its global leadership. Through its dominance of the Asian regional hierarchy, the US has been able to neutralise potential threats to its position from Japan via an alliance, from India by gradually identifying and pursuing mutual commercial and strategic interests, and from China by encircling and deterring it with allied and friendly states that support American preponderance.

Second, recognising US hierarchical preponderance further illuminates one main puzzle about the current Asian security order: contemporary underbalancing, both against a rising China, and against incumbent American power. As Kang claims, one defining characteristic of a hierarchical system is bandwagoning by the lesser states with the primary state. In the case of the US in East Asia, this bandwagoning is manifested in a regional social compact that comprises the related processes of ‘hierarchical assurance’ and ‘hierarchical deference’. Hierarchical assurance emanates from the primary state, which demonstrates its superior ability to manage regional order, ranging from the provision of common security goods (such as the US naval presence ensuring open sea lines of communication and the US nuclear umbrella) to formal security treaties to underwriting vital economic

institutions. If the role and capability of the primary state is accepted by the lesser states, the latter in turn evince hierarchical deference towards the former, in terms of placing higher priority on their relationship than on relations with other major players, by accommodating security imperatives of the primary state, and by adopting policies that would reinforce the primary state's position in the regional hierarchy.

Successful and sustainable hierarchical assurance and deference helps to explain why Japan is not yet a 'normal' country. Japan has experienced significant impetus to revise and expand the remit of its security forces in the last fifteen years. Yet these pressures continue to be insufficient to prompt a revision of its constitution and its remilitarisation. The reason is that the US extends its security umbrella over Japan through their alliance, which has led Tokyo not only to perceive no threat from US hegemony, but has in fact helped to forge a security community between them (Nau [2003](#): 224–30). Adjustments in burden-sharing in this alliance since the 1990s have arisen not from greater independent Japanese strategic activism, but rather from periods of strategic uncertainty and crises for Japan when it appeared that American hierarchical assurance, along with the US position at the top of the regional hierarchy, was in question. Thus the Japanese priority in taking on more responsibility for regional security has been to improve its ability to facilitate the US central position, rather than to challenge it.¹⁴

The US–ROK alliance may be understood in a similar way, although South Korea faces different sets of constraints because of its strategic priorities related to North Korea. As J. J. Suh argues, in spite of diminishing North Korean capabilities, which render the US security umbrella less critical, the alliance endures because of mutual identification – in South Korea, the image of the US as 'the only conceivable protector against possible aggression from the North', and in the US, an image of itself as protector of an allied nation now vulnerable to an 'evil' state suspected of transferring weapons of mass destruction to terrorist networks (Katzenstein and Sil [2004](#): 28). Kang, in contrast, emphasises how South Korea has become less enthusiastic about its ties with the US – as indicated by domestic protests and the rejection of theatre missile defence – and points out that Seoul is not arming against a potential land invasion from China but rather maritime threats (Kang [2003a](#): 79–80). These observations are valid, but they can be explained by hierarchical deference towards the US, rather than China. The ROK's military orientation reflects its identification with and dependence on the US and its

adoption of US strategic aims. In spite of its primary concern with the North Korean threat, Seoul's formal strategic orientation is towards maritime threats, in line with Washington's regional strategy. Furthermore, recent South Korean Defence White Papers habitually cite a remilitarised Japan as a key threat. The best means of coping with such a threat would be continued reliance on the US security umbrella and on Washington's ability to restrain Japan's remilitarisation.¹⁵ Thus, while the US–ROK bilateral relationship is not always easy, its durability is based on South Korea's fundamental acceptance of the United States as the region's primary state and reliance on it to defend and keep regional order. It also does not rule out Seoul and other US allies conducting business and engaging diplomatically with China.

India has increasingly adopted a similar strategy *vis-à-vis* China in recent years. Given its history of territorial and political disputes with China and its contemporary economic resurgence, India is seen as the key potential power balancer to a growing China. Yet, India has sought to negotiate settlements about border disputes with China, and has moved significantly towards developing closer strategic relations with the US. Apart from invigorated defence cooperation in the form of military exchange programmes and joint exercises, the key breakthrough was the agreement signed in July 1995 which facilitates renewed bilateral civilian nuclear cooperation (for a good review of these developments, see Mohan [2007b](#): 197–205). Once again, this is a key regional power that could have balanced more directly and aggressively against China, but has rather chosen to align itself or bandwagon with the primary power, the US, partly because of significant bilateral gains, but fundamentally in order to support the latter's regional order-managing function.

Recognising a regional hierarchy and seeing that the lower layers of this hierarchy have become more active since the mid-1970s also allows us to understand why there has been no outright balancing of China by regional states since the 1990s. On the one hand, the US position at the top of the hierarchy has been revived since the mid-1990s, meaning that deterrence against potential Chinese aggression is reliable and in place.¹⁶ On the other hand, the aim of regional states is to try to consolidate China's inclusion in the regional hierarchy at the level below that of the US, not to keep it down or to exclude it. East Asian states recognise that they cannot, without great cost to themselves, contain Chinese growth. But they hope to socialise China by enmeshing it in peaceful regional norms and economic and security

institutions. They also know they can help to ensure that the capabilities gap between China and the US remains wide enough to deter a power transition. Because this strategy requires persuading China about the appropriateness of its position in the hierarchy and of the legitimacy of the US position, all East Asian states engage significantly with China, with the small Southeast Asian states refusing openly to 'choose sides' between the US and China. Yet, hierarchical deference continues to explain why regional institutions such as the ASEAN Regional Forum, ASEAN+3 (ASEAN plus China, Japan and South Korea) and the East Asia Summit have made limited progress. While the US has made room for regional multilateral institutions after the end of the Cold War, its hierarchical preponderance also constitutes the regional order to the extent that it cannot comfortably be excluded from any substantive strategic developments. On the part of some lesser states (particularly Japan and Singapore), hierarchical deference is manifested in inclusionary impulses (or at least impulses not to exclude the US or US proxies) in regional institutions, such as the East Asia Summit in December 2005. Disagreement on this issue with others, including China and Malaysia, has stymied potential progress in these regional institutions (see, for instance, Malik [2006b](#)).

The third and final way in which the US-led Asian hierarchy clarifies the regional–global security dynamic is that it amplifies our understanding of how and why the US–China relationship is now the key to prospects for regional order. The vital nature of the Sino-American relationship stems from these two states' structural positions. As discussed earlier in this chapter, China is the primary second-tier power in the regional hierarchy. As important, it has the capability to transcend the regional–global divide in its potential challenge to the US. On the one hand, regional developments can become global challenges. As Chinese power grows and Chinese activism spreads beyond Asia, the US is less and less able to see China as merely a regional power – witness the growing concerns about Chinese investment and aid in certain African countries. This causes a disjuncture between US global interests and US regional interests: regional attempts to engage and socialise China are aimed at mediating its intentions. This process, however, cannot stem Chinese growth, which forms the material basis of US threat perceptions. Apprehensions about the growth of China's power culminates in US fears about the region being 'lost' to China, echoing Cold War concerns that transcribed regional defeats into systemic setbacks.¹⁷ On the other hand,

global strategic actions can become regional challenges. US security strategy post-Cold War and post-11 September have been undertaken at the global level, but naturally have regional manifestations. In Asia, the strengthening of US alliances with Japan and Australia, and the deployment of US troops to Central, South and Southeast Asia, all cause China to fear a consolidation of US global hegemony that will threaten Chinese national security in the regional context and then stymie China's global reach.

Thus the key determinants of the East Asian security order relate to two core questions: can the US be persuaded that China can act as a reliable 'regional stakeholder' that will help to buttress regional stability and US global security aims?¹⁸ Can China be convinced that the US has neither territorial ambitions in Asia nor the desire to encircle China, but will help to promote Chinese development and stability as part of its global security strategy (see Wang Jisi [2005](#))? These questions, however, cannot be asked in the abstract, outside the context of negotiation about their relative positions in the regional and global hierarchy. This is the main structural dilemma: as long as the US does not give up its primary position in the Asian regional hierarchy, China is very unlikely to act in a way that will provide comforting answers to the two questions. Yet, the East Asian regional order has been and still is constituted by US hegemony, and to change that could be extremely disruptive and may lead to regional actors acting in highly destabilising ways. Rapid Japanese remilitarisation, armed conflict across the Taiwan straits, Indian nuclear brinkmanship directed towards Pakistan, or a highly destabilised Korean peninsula are all illustrative of potential regional disruptions.

Conclusion

Structurally, Asia is an arena which experiences great interpenetration of global and regional security because of the role of the US and because China is a potential challenger to US hegemony. To construct a coherent account of Asia's evolving security order, this chapter has suggested that not only is the US not an extra-regional actor, but that it is the *central* force in constituting Asian stability and order. The major patterns of equilibrium and turbulence in the region since 1945 can be explained by the relative stability of the US position at the top of the regional hierarchy, with periods of greatest insecurity being correlated with greatest uncertainty over the American

commitment to managing regional order. Furthermore, relationships of hierarchical assurance and hierarchical deference explain the unusual character of regional order in the post-Cold War era.

However, the greatest contemporary challenge to East Asian order is the potential conflict between China and the US over regional hegemony, a contest made more potent because of the intertwining of regional and global security concerns. This chapter has provided a deliberately structural account to show the context in which more optimistic approaches to the US–China tension operate. Diplomacy, interdependence and socialisation are clearly important. Yet focusing on the global–regional nexus in terms of structural security conditions suggests that policy-makers and leaders must ultimately address the question of positionality in the regional hierarchy. Ultimately, investigating positionality requires conceptual lenses that go beyond basic material factors because it entails social and normative questions. How can China be brought more into a leadership position, while being persuaded to buy into shared strategic interests and constrain its own in ways that its vision of regional and global security may eventually be reconciled with that of the US and other regional players? How can Washington be persuaded that its central position in the hierarchy must be ultimately shared in ways yet to be determined?

The future of the Asian security order is tightly bound up with the durability of the United States' global hegemony and regional domination. At the regional level, the main scenarios of disruption are an outright Chinese challenge to US leadership, or the defection of key US allies, particularly Japan. Recent history suggests (and this chapter has pointed out) that challenges to or defections from US leadership will come at junctures where it appears that the US commitment to the region is in doubt, which in turn destabilises the hierarchical order. At the global level, American geopolitical over-extension will be the key cause of change. As argued by Michael Mastanduno elsewhere in this volume, this is the one factor that could lead to both greater regional and global turbulence, if only by the attendant strategic uncertainty triggering regional challenges or defections. However, it is notoriously difficult to gauge thresholds of over-extension. More positively, Asia is a region that has adjusted to previous periods of uncertainty about US primacy. Arguably, the regional consensus over the US as primary state in a system of benign hierarchy could accommodate a shifting of the strategic burden to US allies like Japan and Australia as a means of systemic

preservation. The alternatives that could surface as a result of not doing so would appear to be much worse.

¹ A reworked version of this chapter appears as ‘Hierarchy and the role of the United States in the East Asian security order’, *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, **8**(3) 2008: 353–77.

² A good indication of this was the rejection of intermittent Soviet proposals for regional collective security arrangements, which were crudely directed towards China. See Horelick ([1977](#)).

³ On the non-territorial basis of America's global power, for instance, see Katzenstein ([2005](#): 213–15).

⁴ The five principles were put forward by China at negotiations with India about Tibet in 1953–4. They are: mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty; mutual non-aggression; mutual non-interference in internal affairs; equality and mutual benefit; and peaceful coexistence. For the text of TAC, see www.aseansec.org/64.htm.

⁵ According to a former Prime Minister of Singapore, for instance, the United States is a ‘reassuring and stabilizing force’ in Southeast Asia and the American presence a ‘determining reason for the peace and stability Asia enjoys today’ (Goh Chok Tong [2000](#)). On offshore balancing, see Layne ([1997](#)).

⁶ One of the key themes that President Richard Nixon learned from his landmark visit to China in February 1972 was that the Chinese leaders were deeply worried about the threat of resurgent Japanese militarism, and appreciated the US military presence in the region for the restraining effect it had on its Japanese ally. See Goh ([2005a](#): 176–9, 225). For a discussion about contemporary Chinese accommodation to US predominance in the region, see Goh ([2005c](#): 218–19).

⁷ This conflict management element is one that Kang mentions, but does not develop, for the China case.

⁸ This is an indirect deterrence effect only, as the US has specifically distanced itself from involvement in the South China Sea territorial disputes.

⁹ Two minor observations are that the central state's position is sustained

basically by material power but is supplemented by ideational or ‘soft’ power; and that there is relatively little interference in lesser states’ internal affairs.

¹⁰ Gaddis (1974) argues that the Korean War was the real turning point which launched the Cold War as global containment of international communist domination.

¹¹ The guidelines are available at www.mofa.go.jp/region/n-america/us/security/guideline2.html.

¹² In terms of economic and technological capabilities, Japan is the key potential challenger to the US. Although Chinese intentions might be more antagonistic, its current capabilities are inferior to those of Japan. See Nau (2003: 225–8).

¹³ The United States is viewed as the key strategic force in the region for two reasons: its alliance with Japan forestalls Japanese remilitarisation; and its military presence deters Chinese aggression in the Taiwan straits.

¹⁴ A more convincing argument than Kang's explanation that Japanese non-normalisation is due to lack of threat perception and hierarchical deference *vis-à-vis* China.

¹⁵ For useful discussions of the less attractive alternatives to the US alliance, see Eberstadt *et al.* (2007).

¹⁶ The obvious exception here is of course Taiwan. The deliberate US policy of strategic ambiguity leaves Taipei and its supporters with significant doubts about the reliability of the deterrent effect on the mainland.

¹⁷ This tendency is best illustrated by the ‘domino theory’ that permeated American strategic thinking during the John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson administrations, which in turn provided strong motivation for the war in Vietnam.

¹⁸ Former US Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick (2005) initiated the call for China to become a ‘responsible stakeholder’.

7 Democracy and security in East Asia

William Case

Does it matter for security in East Asia whether governments operate democratic or authoritarian regimes? Where democratic change has taken place, do governments grow so accountable to their citizens that security is enhanced? Conversely, are governments that operate authoritarian regimes so unchecked that they are necessarily reckless in their policy-making, causing security to diminish? This chapter marks a preliminary effort to address these questions about causal relations between democracy and security in the East Asian setting. We will see that their answers have both regional and global implications. They show how governments in East Asia that operate different kinds of political regimes may achieve different security outcomes. Hence, they bear lessons too for governments outside the region which, in seeking to promote security, may favour particular regime types.

In this analysis, democracy is understood in ‘minimal’ procedural terms. In its twin dimensions, then, specified by Robert Dahl ([1971](#)), democracy involves respect for civil liberties, most notably, freedoms of communication and assembly, coupled with elections that are regular, fair and meaningful in their determination of top position-holders who wield state power. Following the Copenhagen School (Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde [1998](#)), however, security is conceptualised in a more ‘holistic’ way. Though it includes traditional concerns of territorial integrity and sovereignty, the notion of security – and the discourse about security that governments conduct – has come in the wake of the Cold War to embrace such issues as economic development, cultural outlooks and sustainable environments.

There is some evidence that on a broad plane, democracies rarely wage war against each other (see, for example, Mansfield and Snyder [1995](#); Maoz and Russett [1993](#); Russett [1990](#); Weart [1998](#)). Democracies usually eschew also the heedless developmental experiments that result in planning disasters, massive dislocation and famine. But in East Asia's experience, are there any finer correlations that can be drawn between democratic regimes and benign security outcomes? If, on the other side of the ledger, we control for such egregious totalitarian outliers as Maoist China, Pol Pot's Kampuchea, and North Korea, as well as for the barbarous military councils in Myanmar, do the dictatorships and hegemonic party systems that amount to more

‘ordinary’ forms of authoritarian rule generally produce any less security? What effects do different shades of democratic procedures and authoritarian controls, blending into the region's distinctive category of hybrid regimes, have on security outcomes?

The analysis here begins by enumerating some reasons that governments operating democratic regimes would be expected to produce better security outcomes than do those perpetuating authoritarian ones. Next, these expectations are tested in the East Asian setting against what Sheldon Simon ([2001](#): 3) has identified as ‘classic’ security concerns over sovereignty and territoriality. This examination is then applied to new, more expansive sets of non-traditional or human security issues, in particular, economic growth and development, communal and class relations and human rights. This chapter's main aim, then, is to gauge whether democracy ‘makes a difference’ across a variety of security fronts. Its findings suggest, however, that after controlling for the outliers in the region identified above, the comparative performance of democracy and authoritarianism in East Asia remains ambiguous. Further, this can mostly be attributed to the newness of democracy in the region, the feebleness of its procedures, and hence, the weak commitments that its institutions generate among both elites and social forces. Thus, while security policy may be open to inputs from elites and social forces, democratic procedures and institutions may no better encourage restraint and moderation on security issues than does authoritarian rule. Further, these findings appear to undermine fundamental assumptions held by the George W. Bush administration about how international security works. In his policy declarations, President Bush argued consistently that global stability could only be bolstered by the democratic transformation of non-Western and developing countries through the export of Western democratic values (Bush [2002](#)).

Security: comparing democracy and authoritarianism

In Joseph Schumpeter's minimal, though shrewd conceptualisation, democracy involves regularised competitions between elites for mass-level support (Schumpeter [1970](#); [1994](#)). These competitions reach their peak during elections, with elites framing contrary appeals through which to energise citizens. But though steeply hierarchical, this understanding of democracy means that citizens are able to impose some accountability by

renewing or replacing the state's top position-holders. Moreover, during the long interludes between elections, they can participate in policy-making. Exercising their civil liberties of free communication and association, political parties, business groups and elements of civil society influence position-holders, ensuring policy responsiveness (see Powell [2004](#)).

Accordingly, with democracy characterised by regular elections through which to impose accountability and civil liberties that encourage responsiveness, governments are pressed to deliver the security outcomes that citizens want. To be sure, it is in areas of defence and foreign policy that governments are usually regarded as most autonomous from mass-level preferences. But as security is steadily reinterpreted from the classic concerns held by governments over sovereignty and territoriality to a much larger bundle of mass-level anxieties over political stability, economic performance, social relations, resource depletion, the environment, human rights and other issues, citizens grow more attuned to diffuse kinds of threats. Hence, the governments that emerge from competitions between elites confront an ever-lengthening list of security issues. Made accountable and responsive by democracy, it might readily be expected that these governments would produce high levels of security.

But democracy means also that the competitiveness that takes place between elites trickles downwards, commensurately sharpening rivalries between different social communities and class strata. Some groups learn quickly that the security policies sought by other groups are pre-emptive or retaliatory in character, targeting them in ways that diminish their own security. Thus, we are right to ask whether governments in these circumstances, in giving vent to escalating fears and competing preferences, are better able to provide security across a wide range of policy areas and constituencies than are governments which, in perpetuating authoritarian regimes, may contain this cycling from the start.

Moreover, it is not just that where democracy prevails, social communities and class strata may spontaneously discover their differences. It may be too that competing elites, in order to energise their mass-level support, prioritise the security of their own co-ethnic nationals or class affiliates, heightening the suspicions of others and instigating fierce rivalries. What is more, behind their smokescreen of arousing appeals, elites who win top executive positions may quietly exploit the institutional gaps that in new democracies persist between themselves and citizens, enabling them to slip the leash of

accountability and responsiveness in order to enrich themselves corruptly. At the same time, they ensure that some of the largesse that they accumulate cascades throughout the political economy, greasing electoral machinery and vote-buying networks. Thus, as state resources and assets are effectively looted, security is further eroded.

Moreover, in its origins and practice, democracy may diminish political stability, and hence security, in other ways. Across Southeast Asia and in Korea too, transitions to democracy have taken place through bottom-up 'replacement' and often violent 'popular upsurge', most notably, the bloodlettings of 'Black May' in Thailand in 1992 and the Jakarta riots in Indonesia in 1998 (Case [2004](#)). And once these transitions have been completed, the low-quality democracies that emerge, tainted by corrupt practices, often underfunded populist distributions, and sundry other policy failings, appear often to encourage new rounds of upsurge, variously designated as 'rally democracy', 'muscular democracy' and 'People Power II' (see, for example, Burton [2001](#)). As Mark Thompson ([2004](#)) records, in discovering unexpected dissonance between democratic politics and good governance agendas, East Asia's middle classes have reacted by returning to the streets. And in doing this, they sometimes win the favour of disaffected elites in the legislature, the courts and most crucially, the military.

Recent developments in Indonesia are illustrative. In initiating a series of protests against President Abdurrahman Wahid in 2001, middle-class elements helped to build pressure for a non-electoral transfer of power. And in gaining the sanction of alienated factions in parliament, a series of crucial events unfolded that led finally to Abdurrahman's impeachment and resignation. In the Philippines during the same year, middle-class protests against President Joseph Estrada encouraged the military to withdraw its support. Estrada was soon arrested, an outcome that was hastily given sanction by the Philippines Supreme Court. But most dramatically, in Thailand in 2006, direct action was taken by largely middle-class elements in the parks and plazas of Bangkok against Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra. At the behest of the king, the courts then overturned electoral results that had renewed Thaksin's tenure shortly before. The military then carried out a coup, forcing Thaksin to remain in exile, while a tribunal banned his political party, a sequence that amounted to a full authoritarian reversal.

In sum, new democracies may be tested by the rivalries between socio-political groups to which competing elites contribute, as well as the nascence

of rule of law that incumbent executives exploit. In this situation, state capacity to act on classic concerns over sovereignty and territoriality may be weakened, especially as society grows divided along lines that raise non-traditional issues too. The question we turn to now is whether governments that perpetuate authoritarian regimes produce security outcomes that are necessarily worse.

Authoritarianism is hallmarked by exclusionary and often static patterns of leadership and power, usually articulated by analysts as hegemonic party systems, military governments or personal dictatorships (Huntington [1991](#)). While in varying measure substituting responsiveness to citizens with coercion, authoritarian rule remains closely attuned to tight clusters of 'first family' members, business cronies and favoured officials who infest key parts of the state apparatus. This reflects a process of sinking roots in narrow and privileged communities and classes. Patterns of corruption, then, though more concentrated than in new democracies, flourish in net terms with similar magnitude. They grow especially intense in the outlying cases of totalitarianism and militarism mentioned above, egregiously favouring top party officials and junta members, while either rigorously mobilising or harshly suppressing social forces. In these cases, then, while state capacity to address classic concerns over security may endure, performance on human security issues remains dismal.

But what about governments that perpetuate more typical forms of authoritarianism in East Asia today, specifically, hegemonic party systems, 'ordinary' military governments and personal dictatorships, sometimes brightened by enough electoral competitiveness that they amount to 'hybrid' regimes (see Diamond [2002](#)). Though to a lesser extent than outlying totalitarian and military variants, these systems are also exclusionary, coercive and corrupt. Even so, they avoid both continuous high-pitched mobilisation and deadening military brutality. They may also avoid the polarising appeals that can characterise democratic politics, especially during elections. Indeed, governments in East Asia that perpetuate authoritarian rule base their legitimacy on an avowed capacity to manage fissiparous societies and promote rapid economic development, all the while protecting the cherished cultural tenets that once were designated as 'Asian values'. Accordingly, while tending to classic security concerns, these governments claim also to address non-traditional security issues. The following sections will explore these claims, and indeed, whether, in East Asia, democratic

politics, authoritarian rule or some other regime type is best able to produce benign security outcomes.

Democracy and classic security concerns

This section canvasses classic security concerns over sovereignty and territoriality. It asks under what kind of political regime in East Asia are governments better able to avoid – or to prevail in – cross-national conflicts over sovereignty and territoriality. It briefly examines subnational conflicts too, made manifest in terrorism, separatism and insurgency.

Cross-national conflict: sovereignty and territoriality

In first addressing classic security concerns, we discover that the East Asian record really tells us little about whether democratic politics or authoritarian rule are better able to avoid cross-national conflict over national sovereignty and territorial integrity. As mentioned above, governments in the region have conformed admirably to the tenet that democracies do not go to war against one another (lest one count Indonesia's murderous subterfuge amid East Timor's popular referendum over autonomy in 1999). But then, since the conflict between China and Vietnam nearly three decades ago, so also have governments perpetuating authoritarian rule. Indeed, while the Korean peninsula and the Strait of Taiwan may remain flashpoints, and sundry disputes persist in the South China Sea, no regimes of any kind in East Asia have been involved in sustained and overt cross-national conflict for nearly three decades.

To the contrary, in Southeast Asia especially, analysts regularly note that regionalist cooperation and pragmatic sentiments have trumped ideological differences and war-making impulses. Southeast Asia features an astonishing variety of regime types: new democracies in the Philippines, Indonesia and perhaps East Timor; 'post-totalitarian' politics (Linz and Stepan [1996](#)) in Vietnam and Laos; militarist exclusion in Myanmar; softer forms of authoritarian rule in Singapore, Cambodia and Brunei Darussalam; perennial oscillation in Thailand; and a stable hybrid regime in Malaysia. The region also palpitates with interminable, if low-lying border disputes, often traceable to the arbitrariness and imprecision of colonial-era agreements. However, despite their ideological dissonance and lingering territorial spats, the governments operating these respective regimes have, over the past four decades, coalesced in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN),

seemingly the world's most enduring regional organisation. Further, though ASEAN was born partly in classic concerns over security, it has extended its efforts to issues of human security. A dense and highly regularised calendar of high-level meetings thus addresses intricate questions of trade relations, development and even cultural integrity.

From this platform, ASEAN has projected itself as the nucleus around which to gather a far more momentous regional grouping, one that has in recent years been formally denominated as the East Asian community. In many ways, ASEAN is well equipped for this role, functioning as a lesser, but hence, inoffensive broker between China and Japan (Acharya [2001](#): 168). Thus, while ASEAN approaches from the hemispheric South with but modest world standing, it undertakes vital mediation, useful in smoothing the bare metal frictions between China and Japan, their rankings undergoing epic readjustment. What is more, through ASEAN's sponsorship of the ASEAN Regional Forum, it has helped to allay suspicions over ambiguous frontiers, dubious exclusionary zones and uncharted resources in the South China Sea (Acharya [2001](#): [chapter 5](#)). Thinner, but increasingly important sinews of cooperation also span the Mekong Delta, easing tensions over land and water use between Myanmar, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and China's Yunnan and Guangxi provinces (Dosch [2007](#): [chapter 4](#)).

In Northeast Asia, too, we find multiple regime types, though arrayed more starkly into three categories. Democracy prevails in Japan, Korea, Taiwan and Mongolia; post-totalitarian politics are unfolding in China; and a fully mobilised totalitarian regime persists in North Korea. Moreover, with their historical and territorial enmities more keenly felt, these countries have been unable to forge any equivalent to ASEAN. And yet, despite the sharp differences in their democratic and authoritarian politics, as well as the absence of any security buffer provided by the East Asian community, these countries too have avoided cross-national conflicts over national sovereignty and territorial integrity. Thus, from the perspective of this chapter, what most stands out is that given the extraordinary diversity of regimes that are involved in dispelling classic concerns over security, democratic politics can be awarded little credit. Rather, whether the governments of ASEAN member countries operate democratic or authoritarian regimes, they shrink from majoritarian outcomes when engaging one another, relying instead on the principles of consultation, consensus and mutual veto (Acharya [2001](#); Leifer [1995](#); Narine [1998](#)). In Northeast Asia, too, great chasms exist between

countries that feature democratic and authoritarian politics. And the governments that perpetuate different regimes remain unbuffered by a cooperative regional grouping. Yet, irrespective of their regime types, they continue to favour mediation over conflict.

But if it is true that the weight of the United States in East Asia helps to reinforce ASEAN's operating mechanisms and Northeast Asia's sense of restraint, what then are the implications of the presence or absence of democracy? Does a government that operates a democratic regime necessarily enjoy closer relations with the United States and hence, derive greater security outcomes? In its many facets and complexity, a fuller answer to this question is best left to other authors in this volume who address specific bilateral security relationships more finely. I note here, however, that in view of its long-standing, though lately diminished commitments to the democratisation of politics around the world, the US government is, *ceteris paribus*, more ready to support governments that respect civil liberties and regularly hold elections. Yet with other things seldom remaining equal in East Asia, it appears that bilateral fealty may be generated less today by democratic commitments than out of fear over China (White 2006).

On this score, recall also the close ties forged by the United States with Thailand's tough military governments during the 1960s to early 1970s as it sought to contain Vietnam (Jackson and Wiwat [1986](#); Randolph [1986](#)). It was during this wartime juncture as well that the US nurtured its ties with Singapore, the government of which, despite its tireless suppression of civil liberties and its manipulations of elections, has graduated into one of the most forceful supporters of a sustained US security role in the region (Leifer [2000](#)). What is more, when, after the war, Vietnam invaded Cambodia, the United States continued infamously to draw a new line of containment by supporting the Khmer Rouge as Cambodia's rightful government (Kiernan [2002](#)). Still, the United States does not always resort to such expedience. It has steadfastly condemned the repression of Myanmar's government, most recently by invoking even heavier sanctions after the Tatmadaw's brutal crackdown in October 2007. But this, of course, only erodes more deeply any consistency in the relationship between regime type and security that is mediated by the United States.

It also appears that governments that operate hybrid regimes, enabling them to flash some democratic credentials, but also to perpetuate authoritarian controls that they depict as necessary for security, are able to

retain or regenerate their ties with the United States. One recent example lies in the readiness of the United States, after the 11 September attacks, to commend Malaysia, despite the country's former Prime Minister, Mohammad Mahathir, having so habitually irked US sensibilities during his two decades in office (see, for example, Bottomley [2003](#)). Beginning in 2001, Malaysia's government detained without trial a long roster of political activists that it labelled as militantly Islamist, resorting to a principle of preventive detention under the country's Internal Security Act (ISA) against which the US Congress had once so vigorously railed (Roberts [2002](#)). In turn, Mahathir was swiftly reconfigured by US officials as a 'moderate Muslim' and front-line ally in the war against terrorism (Backman [2002](#)). This led to their much publicised formation of a new centre for counter-terrorism in Malaysia's administrative capital, Putrajaya (Hamid Albar [2003](#)), again making plain the lack of correspondence between regime type, security outcomes and the presence in the region of the United States.

Subnational conflict: terrorism, separatism and insurgency

This section turns to classic concerns over subnational conflicts, specifically as they are made manifest in terrorist, separatist or insurgent violence. Analysis thus focuses on Southeast Asia. To be sure, Northeast Asia has not been immune to subnational pressures, with Japan, for example, facing some leftist terrorist activity during the 1970s, and China confronted by simmering separatist resentments in Tibet and Xinjiang. Indeed, among the highly fragmented Uyghur community in Xinjiang, some twenty separatist groups appear to operate, their activities now acknowledged, even exaggerated by Beijing in the wake of 11 September (Christoffersen [2002](#)). However, these kinds of pressures have been far more acutely felt in Southeast Asia, given the subregion's great ethnic and religious pluralism, the concretisation of faultlines through colonial experience, and the uneven modernisation and globalised communication that have intensified group or local resentments. Yet while the kinds of regimes that governments operate help to shape the character that subnational conflict takes, it remains unclear whether democracy or authoritarianism is more likely to precipitate violent confrontation. We will see that both democratic and authoritarian regimes appear vulnerable in Southeast Asia, even if for different reasons.

On one side, we learn that democracies, though ostensibly respecting civil liberties of free communication and association, may fail to placate alienated

social groups. To the contrary, these groups may exploit freedoms that exist by organising in violent pursuit of anti-system outcomes (Chalk [1995](#); Crenshaw [1997](#); Wilkinson [1977](#)). The Red Army Faction in Japan, the Red Brigades in Italy, neo-Nazis in Germany today, the 'Kach' party in Israel, and various leftist organisations, survivalist groups and al-Qaeda in the United States provide ready illustrations. Accordingly, in Southeast Asia, new democracies have been afflicted by a drumbeat of terrorist, separatist and insurgent violence. In Indonesia, the International Crisis Group (ICG) reports that Islamist elements within Jemaah Islamiyah, while acknowledging that the country's regime has grown more open, assert that it is 'still controlled by infidels [and] any accommodation with a non-Islamic political system could contaminate the faithful and [is] forbidden' (quoted in ICG [2002](#): 5–6). However, while these Islamists refuse to contest elections, they have made full use of civil liberties, as well as the deeper constitutional and practical limits on the government's capacity to act on their grievances. Terrorist groups in Indonesia have organised extensive bombing campaigns against Western tourists, hotels and diplomatic missions, properties identified with local Chinese, and non-Muslim villages and places of worship. What is more, they appear sometimes to have gained sanction from like-minded politicians, as well as support from sections of the military (ICG [2002](#): 8–9), raising doubts over the contributions made by security forces to better security outcomes, even under democratic regimes.

We observe also that even when militaries confront terrorists or separatists with greater purpose, they may do so with such viciousness that they only intensify local resentments and resistance, summoning reactions that play squarely into the hands of the terrorists that they confront. Democracy may do little to discourage this trajectory. After Indonesia's democratic transition, though President Megawati Sukarnoputri shrank during her tenure from confronting groups associated with terrorism on Java and Bali for fear of raising tensions still further, she so acted on her nationalist sentiments against separatism in Aceh that she imposed martial law. But the security forces then went about their work with such savagery – 'finishing off, killing, those who still engage in armed resistance', in the words of the military commander in chief (quoted in Dosch [2007](#): 94) – they did little to curb the subnational conflict. It was only the still larger disaster of the tsunami in December 2004 that in stunning both sides, while attracting international scrutiny, disposed both the government and the insurgents to seek accommodation.

Similar trajectories have unfolded in Southeast Asia's other new democracies. In the Philippines, President Estrada, frustrated by the slow pace of negotiations with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), a separatist group operating in the southern island of Mindanao, resorted abruptly to the fruitless application of military force. Estrada's ouster in 2001 encouraged his successor, Gloria Arroyo, to restart the peace process. But after new rounds of negotiations also bogged down, she too reverted to military force, rekindling local resistance and perpetuating a conflict that has taken well over 100,000 lives (BBC Monitoring Asia Pacific [2007](#); Reuters Foundation [2007](#)). Also note the intensification during her tenure of insurgent activity by the Philippine Communist Party's guerrilla forces, the New People's Army (NPA) (Reuters Foundation [2007](#)). Meanwhile, in Thailand, Thaksin declared martial law in 2004 after an upsurge in terrorist violence in the country's restive southernmost provinces, the redoubt of the Muslim Pattani Malays. But despite, or perhaps because of, the brutal ineptness with which the armed forces undertook their task, reaching its nadir in the Krue Se and Tak Bae incidents (Amnesty International [2006](#)), subnational conflict escalated rapidly into school-burnings, car-bombings and drive-by killings that targeted the symbols of Thai stateness and Buddhist dominance.

Dismal though democracy's record may be in containing subnational conflict in Southeast Asia, it is difficult to say whether governments perpetuating typical authoritarian regimes have fared any better. To be sure, in New Order Indonesia under President Suharto, terrorist activity was limited to sporadic bombings of Christian churches, Buddhist monuments and bank branches associated with ethnic Chinese. But the social terrain over which he presided had not yet been roiled by US retaliation in Afghanistan and Iraq after 11 September, a campaign that clearly animated such groups as Jemaah Islamiyah, Laskar Jihad and Pembela Islam, however localised their grievances and brittle their international networks (Rabasa [2003](#)). But even if it could be shown that by nearly extinguishing civil liberties of communication and association Suharto was better able to dampen terrorism than were the democratically elected governments that succeeded him, his capacity to dampen separatist sentiments in Aceh, as well as in East Timor and Papua, was no more effective.

Similarly, though in the Philippines under Ferdinand Marcos the government was able to conclude a peacekeeping agreement with the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), this motivated recalcitrant members of

the movement to hive off in the still more militant MILF. It was also during Marcos' tenure that harsh suppression of leftist trade union leaders and social activists precipitated the formation of the NPA's guerrilla forces (Reuters Foundation [2007](#)). Moreover, in Thailand's southern provinces, subnational conflict cropped up during the 1930s in reaction to the assimilationist policies imposed through General Phibun's authoritarian rule (Noor [2004](#)). A succession of military governments then triggered new rounds of violence during the 1960s and 1970s. And during the mid-1970s, the military's termination of a three-year experiment in democratic politics, marked by the massacre of students at Thammasat University, encouraged students and workers to take to the countryside in order to join an ongoing rural communist insurgency (Kanok [1982](#): 60 ff.).

More recently, Singapore's experience demonstrates that where group dynamics are inflamed by cross-national influences and social grievances, yet are denied any outlet under authoritarian rule, terrorist activities may take place. In a recent study, Lily Rahim ([1998](#)) has shown that Singapore's breakneck pursuit of industrialisation and secular development has marginalised and sharply alienated much of the country's Muslim Malay community. David Martin Jones and Mike Smith ([2002](#): 348–9) have further observed that the government's practised suppression of even non-violent dissidence, targeting, for example, Muslim activists who have criticised Singapore's foreign policy alignment with the US over the internet, has helped to 'radicalise a younger generation of Malays'. Thus, with the Muslim Malay community harbouring profound social grievances, yet possessing little access to state power, a small group of alleged Jemaah Islamiyah members advanced plans to bomb US assets and state-owned infrastructure throughout the city-state (Zakis and Macko [2002](#)). Notwithstanding the Singapore government's unparalleled capacity for surveillance, then, these activities were only brought to its attention by British intelligence after evidence was fortuitously discovered in Afghanistan (Martin Jones and Smith [2002](#): 347).

In sum, there is evidence that at least in Southeast Asia, governments that operate both democratic and authoritarian regimes are equally likely to precipitate subnational conflict. Further, they are equally hindered afterwards in resolving it. Much of Southeast Asia has in consequence bristled with terrorist, separatist and insurgent violence. And yet, there have been periods of respite in some country cases, as well as more consistent records of

peaceful relations in others. While a mono-causal explanation based on regime type may be insufficient to account for these benign security outcomes, some correlations appear still to be grounded in the various forms regimes take. But if neither democracy nor authoritarianism corresponds squarely with the abatement of subnational conflict, what kind of regimes do?

In contrast to new democracy in the Philippines, Indonesia and, until recently, Thailand on one side, and long periods of authoritarian rule in this same set of countries, as well as in Singapore, we again locate Malaysia's even-handed practice of hybrid politics. In this configuration, reasonably competitive elections have been held regularly, yet civil liberties have been sharply curtailed (Case [1993](#); Crouch [1993](#); Zakaria [1989](#)). Thus, while a variety of factors have enabled Islamism to gain ground in Malaysia over the last several decades, percolating through the urban Malay middle class, penetrating the rural hinterland and finding voice through the opposition Parti Islam se-Malaysia, the incidence of local terrorist activities has remained very limited. Significant numbers of young Malay men have attended *madrassa* (Islamic boarding schools) locally and abroad, while some have gained military training in Afghanistan and the southern Philippines. Further, the presence in Malaysia of Jemaah Islamiyah leaders, as well as the participation of Malaysian nationals in terrorist activities abroad have been well-documented (ICG [2002](#)). It is this that led US security agencies to conclude that Malaysia was a 'primary operational launch pad' for the 11 September attacks in New York and Washington (Gershman [2002](#): 60).

However, what stands out in Malaysia is that while group dynamics, social grievances and cross-national influences appear at least as conducive to terrorist outcomes here as in our other country cases, no credible evidence has yet been offered that local persons or sites have been targeted for terrorist activities. To be sure, the government has trumpeted the existence of militant Islamists in its midst, gathered in an organisation said to bear the unlikely epithet of Malaysian Militant Group or KMM (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, 31 January 2002: 20). It also detained some sixty persons without trial under the ISA. In the estimation of many analysts, however, the government did this less to contain terrorist groups than to repress non-violent opposition leaders and dissidents (Human Rights Watch [2004](#)). To be sure, media vilification and arbitrary detention may buttress the tool-kit of any government operating a hybrid regime. And in 'bandwagoning' on global trends towards securitisation in the wake of 11 September, the pretext for

these techniques may be strengthened. But alongside these limits on civil liberties, such governments leaven their rule with reasonably competitive elections, enabling the opposition to gain a toehold in parliament, while perhaps winning a few regional assemblies outright. In short, democratic procedures and authoritarian controls, when separately deployed, may inadvertently give rise to the factors that fuel terrorism. But in skilful combination, they may effectively discourage terrorist progress. Malaysia, unlike more authoritarian country cases in the region, offers some calibrated political space. But unlike the region's new democracies, it applies the coercion that makes operating in this space seem, to Islamists, a tolerable second-best choice. Put differently, opposition parties, dissident groups and social movements in Malaysia are herded into circumscribed institutional arenas, there to avoid blunt coercion, while wielding small measures of state power. They are deterred, then, from carrying out terrorist activities against local targets, or from engaging cross-national terrorist networks. Note too that additional support for this thesis can be found in Thailand during the 1980s when, under the leadership of General Prem Tinsulanonda, the government operated what Chai-anan Samudavanija classified as a 'stable semi-democracy' (Chai-anan [1989](#)). It was during this period that the southern provinces remained most peaceful.

Democracy and non-traditional issues

The comparative performance of governments operating democratic and authoritarian regimes by the more extended terms of non-traditional or human security are briefly evaluated in this section. We thus graduate from scrutinising raw threats to nation-states over sovereignty, territoriality and, indeed, basic public safety to exploring the more deeply rooted sets of conditions and factors in which these threats may incubate. It has become commonplace for analysts to argue that the manifestations of terrorism and separatism enumerated above are instigated less by cross-national forces and networks than by local grievances over economic and social disparities. Rivalries between communal and class-based identities, and the violations of human rights which governments, perhaps in trying to re-establish security, may in their urgency and ruthlessness commit, also constitute prominent manifestations. However, as their dynamics harden into conflict, they begin to accord with more global contours and sites of conflict elsewhere, finally

summoning the cross-national threats that awaken classic security concerns. Terrorist activities that originate in local circumstances, for example, may gradually attract foreign collaborators.

Promoting economic growth and equality

It is far beyond the scope of this chapter to enter the lengthy and vigorous debate over whether governments that operate democratic or authoritarian regimes are better equipped to vitalise their economies (see Hewison, Rodan and Robison [1993](#): 5–7; Neher [1994](#): 247–8; Przeworski *et al.* [2003](#): 447–62; Robison, Hewison and Rodan [1993](#): 29–35). It is noted only briefly here that because economic stagnation and developmental failings can perpetuate the disparities and inflame the tensions that exist between different socio-economic communities and classes, they are increasingly conceptualised as threatening in terms of human security.

Analysts committed to neo-liberal precepts, of course, call for regimes that limit government intervention, enabling free markets spontaneously to unleash growth dynamics. In addition, those who ponder broader questions about the kinds of political regimes that will, in residual areas of state responsibility, foster good governance in corporate regulation and trade mediation, usually favour the openness and competitiveness associated with democratic politics. But as East Asia's record demonstrates, though democracy may correlate with the decentralisation of state power, it does not always bring net reductions in government interventions. Rather, in causing lower-order gatekeepers to proliferate throughout the state apparatus, it can deepen politicisation and corrupt practices across the hinterland, spawning provincial-level *caciques* (chieftains) and bossism in the Philippines and the notorious *jao pho* (godfathers) in Thailand (Pasuk and Baker [2002](#): 351–6; Sidel [1999](#): 1–22). Similarly, in Indonesia today, loose networks have grown up among local party politicians, business people and administrative and military officials, replicating in small scale the collusive patterns that under the New Order's authoritarian rule had centred on Suharto (Hadiz [2005](#): 44; Robison and Hadiz [2004](#)). High levels of corruption also persist in Northeast Asia's new democracies, South Korea and Taiwan (Fields [1995](#): 119, 135–43).

To be sure, corrupt practices were firmly embedded in the political economies of South Korea and Taiwan well before these countries' politics were democratised. But in these cases, as in New Order Indonesia and under

hybrid politics in Malaysia, it appears that when gatekeepers are fewer and payments more focused, corruption reliably lowers barriers to economic growth – especially when it is the state apparatus that first erected them (Khan and Jomo [2000](#): 8–10). But it is not just that high-level officials take payments from economic actors, then reciprocate with helpful government decisions over contracts and regulation. In South Korea, for example, President Park Chung Hee skilfully channelled financial incentives to those whom he recruited as industrialising elites, guiding their behaviours and nurturing their vast corporate *chaebol* (Fields [1995](#): 34–5, 52–5).

While discussion persists over whether democracy or authoritarianism is most conducive to economic growth, East Asia's postwar experience shows that no government operating a democratic regime, save that of Japan, has succeeded in initiating rapid economic growth. And even in Japan, Chalmers Johnson has argued that owing to the persistence of single-party dominance, politics have been less 'democratic' than 'soft authoritarian' (Johnson [1982](#): viii, 305–24). Of course, authoritarianism is an insufficient condition for growth, as East Asia's totalitarian and military subvariants attest. Indeed, Myanmar's government once notoriously counted as a great policy success its earning a United Nations ranking as 'least developed', qualifying it for various forms of aid (Schairer-Vertannes [2001](#); UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office no date). Even so, authoritarianism appears to have been a necessary precondition for the formation of developmental states, apparatuses which, in coordinating key state agencies, local manufacturing groups and export markets, enabled South Korea, Taiwan and Singapore to carve out new centres of innovation and to claim higher places in global production networks (Beeson [2004](#)).

Two more aspects of this record are relevant here. First, the governments of South Korea, Taiwan and Singapore were less motivated in their industrialising aims by the inherent delights of prosperity than by the increased security that economic prowess and dense international links would bring (Weiss [2003](#)). Accordingly, the industrialisation driven by authoritarian rule addressed long-standing concerns over sovereignty and territoriality. Second, though rapid economic growth took place and new class formations appeared, remarkable levels of social equality were preserved (Booth [2003](#)). With growth and equality amounting to economic development, important disparities were avoided that can flare into non-traditional threats to security. Such concerns rage in China today, its quasi-marketisation producing rapid

economic expansion, but sharply diminishing social equality.

This brief summary suggests, then, that in East Asia, democracy is less able than authoritarianism to promote economic growth, at least at the start of trajectories in late-industrialising countries. But however potent authoritarianism might be, governments that perpetuate it were only able to establish developmental states in Northeast Asia and Singapore, settings in which pressures emanating from communal and class differences have, as noted above, historically been faint. These cases were benefited, too, by their timing, gaining singular access to US export markets at a temporally specific Cold War juncture. Most of Southeast Asia, then, given its greater social diversity (or capacity, perhaps, to construct such diversity), as well as its still later pursuit of industrialisation, enables us next to isolate relations between regime types and comparative performance in managing the communal and class disparities that can so profoundly challenge human security.

Managing communal rivalries

In Southeast Asia, communal affiliations and rivalries abound. But like the terrorist and separatist threats to which they can give rise, it seems that they are no better managed by governments operating democratic regimes than by those that perpetuate authoritarian ones. Ambiguous correlations between regime types and security outcomes are again the result. On this count, the ineffectiveness with which democratic politics often addresses the rivalries inherent in 'plural' or 'divided' societies has long been recognised (Lijphart [1999](#); Rabushka and Shepsle [1972](#)). It will thus be rehearsed only briefly below. This section begins, then, by examining the record of authoritarian rule which, while better on this score, remains uneven.

Doubtless the most persistent communal rivalries in the region have emerged between social groups dichotomised as 'indigenous' on one side and 'Overseas' Chinese on the other. However, if authoritarian rule might avoid the competing appeals that through democratic politics can give full vent to these rivalries, it typically involves the concerted manipulation of mass attitudes and identities through strategies of divide and rule. For example, in Thailand, when run by military and bureaucratic cliques before the Second World War, in Vietnam after the Communist Party gained control over the south, and in New Order Indonesia under Suharto, governments aroused popular resentments against the Chinese in order to galvanise their indigenous followings and strengthen their standings. In Indonesia especially,

these manipulations amounted to a pervasive strategy of social control and political domination, yet one that for some decades also brought rapid economic growth.

Governments that operate authoritarian regimes through which purposively to elevate one community over others may avoid unstructured appeals. Yet, in their concerted manipulations, they risk serious leadership errors. By inflaming communal rivalries, they may as swiftly create non-traditional security threats as democracy can. In the case of Indonesia, Suharto provided state contracts, licences and lending to an elite cluster of ethnic Chinese tycoons who, while then duly developing infrastructure and new industries, enriched Suharto's family members through joint venture partnerships and payments. They also replenished his family 'charities' and 'institutes', generating vast sums of patronage resources (Robison and Hadiz [2004](#): 54–60). Hence, by reproducing in 'neo-patrimonialist' modes the strategies once deployed through Dutch colonialism (Crouch [1979](#)), Suharto calculated that it was safer to rely upon the Chinese community as an engine of growth than upon indigenous groups. Put simply, no matter how much capital the Chinese might accumulate, they could never challenge Suharto politically because their social power remained scant. However, while helping to perpetuate Suharto's tenure for more than three decades, these anti-Chinese sentiments welled up repeatedly in small-town violence across the archipelago. And when this enmity coincided with economic crisis in 1998, it gained focus in the horrific Jakarta riots, with elites so shaken by property damage and eroded portfolios that they abandoned Suharto, allowing him to fall and the regime to change (Aspinall [1998](#): 137–41). Plainly, authoritarian rule, in so tightly concentrating state power, produced vast scope for leadership errors and the mismanagement of mass attitudes and identities.

In new democracies too, however, we have seen that with governments and opposition parties trying to energise their followings through highly emotive and competing appeals, they may also bring communal rivalries to the boil. Indeed, competitive elections, the mainstay of democratic procedures, may give peak expression to these sentiments, arousing ethnic hatreds and violence that risk hastening democracy's collapse. In doing this, elections may pose a distinct additive; their conduct and results, whether skewed or accurate, consolidate pre-existing imbalances and feelings of injustice that had heretofore been felt only tacitly. As Donald Horowitz ([2000](#)) has noted, such contests are not competitive elections, but instead rigid censuses.

Thus, in Singapore in 1964 and in Malaysia in 1969 – years in which much fuller democratic procedures prevailed – elections gave rise to sharp ethnic rioting between the local Malay and Chinese communities (Field [1995](#): 101–5; Kua [2007](#); Lai [2004](#)). A year after its upheaval, Singapore departed from the Federation of Malaysia of which it had briefly been a part, then so truncated civil liberties and manipulated elections that its politics grew manifestly authoritarian. And detached from the larger dynamic of Malaysian politics, Singapore's government has sought since to perpetuate ethnic peace through elaborate and penetrative measures of social ‘engineering’ (Trocki [2006](#); Wilson [1978](#)). However, if Singapore's experience spotlights democracy's ineffectiveness in managing communal rivalries, it tells us little about the comparative performance of authoritarian rule. As we have seen, the government's ‘engineering’ has succeeded in so alienating social minorities that terrorist plotting still takes place.

Malaysia's demography – approximately two-thirds Malay, one-quarter Chinese, and the remaining tenth made of ethnic Indians and a panoply of indigenous groups, most of them located in Sabah and Sarawak – has confronted the government with an even more rigorous managerial task. And had the government abandoned democracy for the kind of authoritarianism and structured divide-and-rule strategies practised in New Order Indonesia, it might, in a context of economic crisis, have similarly lost control over social dynamics, precipitating intense ethnic violence and political instability. But after the violence of 1969, Malaysia's government fashioned instead a hybrid regime, one wherein democratic procedures were truncated, but not extinguished, while state power grew concentrated, but retained some elements of accommodation (Zakaria [1989](#)). Democratic space and state resources were thus at some level perpetuated across ethnic lines, exerting Malay ‘dominance’ over the political economy, yet ceding important business nodes to the Chinese. Under this regime, the government re-energised the loyalties of core Malay constituencies, without fully alienating non-Malay communities. Malaysia's experience, then, evokes the great capacity to manage communal rivalries that hybrid regimes can possess. Since 1969, widespread ethnic rioting has never recurred in that country.

Human rights violations

It is in terms of human rights that democratic politics should more readily produce unambiguous security outcomes than authoritarian rule does.

Although democracy does not promise effective governments and policies – only that governments that are unresponsive can be changed – it should at the very least safeguard citizens from mistreatment at the hands of the state. Indeed, across East Asia, governments that operate democratic regimes have stronger human rights records than those perpetuating authoritarian ones do. In Korea and Taiwan in particular, dramatic improvements in regard to human rights were recorded as transitions from martial law to democracy began to unfold during the late 1980s.

However, some counter-examples drawn from Southeast Asia show also that democracy's record on human rights can lapse in severe abuses. It may even be in trying to contain the subnational threats of terrorism, separatism and insurgency that constitute classic concerns over security that governments violate human rights in ways that inversely raise non-traditional security issues. In this situation, the state becomes less a guarantor of security than the perpetrator of insecurity, threatening the well-being of citizens.

In the Philippines, for example, evidence suggests that the military, in targeting journalists and rural activists who challenge timeless patterns of rural oligarchy and agrarian inequalities, has resorted systematically to abductions and extra-judicial killings within a 'climate of impunity'. Since 2001, local human rights groups have documented some 200 disappearances and 830 killings (Landingin [2007](#)). In Thailand in 2003, the elected Prime Minister, Thaksin Shinawatra, after eroding the professionalism that the country's military had begun to nurture by meddling in its promotions processes, grew increasingly bolder in pursuing various 'social campaigns' with great force. Declaring a 'war on social ills', he unleashed the police on alleged drug traffickers in Bangkok. By animating this initiative with incentives and bonuses, it quickly produced several thousand street-side killings. Thaksin then widened this approach into a 'war on dark forces', specifying new kinds of criminal undertakings to be targeted (Mutebi [2004](#): 79). A law enforcement model was also applied by the military in the restive Pattani Malay provinces in the south, leading to the disappearance and death of hundreds of dissidents. And in newly democratised Indonesia, we have seen that Megawati Sukarnoputri gave nationalist sanction to intensified military action in Aceh, greatly increasing human rights violations.

Hence, in its minimal form, democracy has failed in many Southeast Asian settings to perpetuate human rights. Rather, governments that have been insufficiently restrained by nascent democratic procedures have waged

violent actions against social forces that they have branded as terrorist, separatist or insurgency threats. This has given rise to large numbers of disappearances and political killings. Simultaneously, most authoritarian regimes, whether in Southeast Asia or elsewhere in the East Asian region, have posed still fewer constraints on governments. As we would expect, post-totalitarian and militarist outlier countries have produced still graver violations of human rights. But in Korea, Taiwan, the Philippines, Thailand and Indonesia too, where more typical modes of authoritarianism prevailed prior to democratic transitions, human rights were also seriously abused (Field [1995](#): 118; Neher [1994](#): 78, 109).

Thus, in the East Asian setting, governments that operate democratic regimes have produced better human rights records than those operating authoritarian ones, yet have still committed serious violations. What stands out, then, is the comparative performance of hybrid politics. To be sure, in Malaysia, our hybrid exemplar, the government has refused to sign any international covenants on human rights, while regularly invoking the principle of preventive detention against dissidents. Persons who have been arrested may thus be subjected to continuing detention without appeal (Case [2006](#)). And yet, while the country's hybrid politics must be typologised as a kind of authoritarianism, its regard for due process and its record on human rights can be evaluated as better than that of many new democracies in the region. Put bluntly, though there are political prisoners in Malaysia, there are no documented instances of political killings. Hybrid regimes may enable the governments that operate them effectively to pre-empt most of the socio-political behaviours that cumulate in potent challenges, thereby making serious violations of human rights unnecessary in the course of warding off such challenges that crop up.

Conclusions

This chapter has provided some preliminary assessment of the causal connections between democracy and security outcomes. Security has been conceptualised in terms of classic concerns over sovereignty and territoriality, as well as newer interests in economic stagnation, social inequalities, communal rivalries and human rights. The findings presented in this chapter, however, suggest that the relationship between democratic politics, authoritarian rule and security outcomes is, in the East Asian region, highly

ambiguous. Both sets of regimes can either enhance or diminish security. However, they produced some of the outcomes in different ways, encouraging an important new research agenda.

Over the past three decades, there has been little demonstrated relationship between regime type and cross-national conflict in East Asia. Governments operating both democratic and authoritarian regimes have refrained equally from waging wars. But terrorism and separatism in the region, though also classic security concerns, have been regarded by many analysts to be better understood as internal, rather than cross-national threats. And it is in turning to endogenous sources of such threats – which begin to rub against notions of human security – that the differential impacts of regimes on security grow clearer. Democratic politics encourages unstructured appeals by elites who seek to energise domestic constituencies, as well as unfocused patterns of corruption among incumbent executives.

Further, these broad dynamics may precipitate rivalries between social communities that have been equally, if randomly activated, as well as unprompted class-based reactions against populist distributions and poor governance. By contrast, authoritarian rule more often encourages sharply skewed appeals and exclusionary patterns of corruption among elites. While often practised with a greater precision that avoids confrontation for long periods, authoritarianism also risks the leadership errors and mismanagement which, when exacerbated (perhaps by external shocks), trigger momentous socio-political upheavals. Democracy in East Asia produces serious, but syncopated threats to security. Authoritarianism produces less regular, but pent-up and more rapidly transformative threats. On balance, though, it appears that after setting aside authoritarian outliers, democracy's performance on many security indicators is different, but in net terms little better, than that of authoritarianism.

If these findings are valid, they have interesting and potentially broad implications for the study of regional and global security. To be sure, the promotion of democracy by the United States in East Asia has been inconsistent. It was crucial in Japan after the Second World War, supportive in Korea and Taiwan during the 1980s, and helpful in tipping the balance in the Philippines. But its efforts have in other cases failed, as in Myanmar so far, or been trumped by an urgent search for anti-communist or anti-terrorist allies, as in Thailand, Singapore and, most recently perhaps, Malaysia.

But more strikingly, even where democracy has been successfully

promoted, this chapter has shown that on most indices, it is no more effective than authoritarian rule in producing benign security outcomes. For the past three decades, governments operating both sets of regimes have avoided cross-national conflict. Further, the greater incidence of subnational conflicts and non-traditional threats in Southeast Asia than in Northeast Asia must be attributed less to the presence or absence of democracy than to structural variables and dynamics.

On some dimensions, then, it is the comparative performance of hybrid regimes in East Asia that is most distinctive. By combining democratic procedures with authoritarian controls, they enable the governments that operate them to perpetuate their incumbency for long periods of time, though in ways that limit the alienation of social forces. Further, while promoting rapid economic expansion, they foster some mobility, if not equality, preventing class resentments from hardening. Moreover, they permit the executive to manipulate communal rivalries, though skilfully, hence avoiding the unstructured appeals and concerted manipulations that can, in risking popular clashes and leadership errors, respectively threaten democratic politics and authoritarian rule. Governments are never so seriously challenged, then, that they react with magnitudes of repression that amount to egregious human rights violations. Of course, analysis rests in this chapter on the single-country case of Malaysia, hence cautioning analysts and policy-makers against bolder claims. But this preliminary assessment gives us a basis for thinking that if in Northeast Asia, democratic regimes provide better security outcomes on some counts than authoritarian ones, in Southeast Asia, hybrid regimes may perform better than either of them.

8 Security community-building in the Asia-Pacific

Sorpong Peou

The 'pluralistic security community' concept as it applies in the Asia-Pacific region is based on the assumption that individual states can relate to one another more positively as their values and interests converge. In particular, the notion of a 'pluralistic' security community recently developed by Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett ([1998](#): 30) of 'a transnational region comprised of sovereign states whose people maintain dependable expectations of peaceful change' is examined. Concrete instances of viable regional security communities now exist around the world and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is arguably one such case (Acharya [2001](#)). Political realists still question whether states will ever overcome historical or structural rivalries to eventually form a multilateral security community on a regional scale. Reconciling those interests that usually shape state-centric rivalries with norms and values that often serve as preconditions for underwriting the security community-building process is the key to overcoming those tensions that most often impede security communities from evolving.

History suggests that economic interests may help pacify relations among states. This material condition alone, however, remains insufficient for the building and maintenance of security communities (Bearce [2003](#); Nye [1988](#)). Can states build security communities only when they share economic interests, as commercial pacifists and institutional functionalists (or regional integrationists) lead us to believe (Glosny [2006](#); Green and Self [1996](#); Rohwer [1995](#); Rosecrance [1986](#), [1999](#); Teo Chu Cheow [2004](#); Tsunekawa [2005](#))? Some neo-classical realists even argue that weak states tend to 'bandwagon' with hegemons 'for profit' (Schweller [1994](#)). A growing number of East Asian scholars and policy practitioners now seem to believe that this is the case. Some believe that even Japan may be 'ready to join the [Chinese] bandwagon' (Kruger [2002](#): 16). Zhang Yunling, head of the Institute for Asia-Pacific Studies at China's Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, posits this argument bluntly: 'China's emergence is a fact. You can't reject it...for Asean, there is only one thing left: Figure out how to use this opportunity' (Laurence [2002](#): 15). President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo of the Philippines recently observed that 'engagement with China has been good for

the Philippines and it has been good for [ASEAN]' (Greenlees [2006](#): 1). Other ASEAN state leaders also count on positive economic and commercial relations with China to succeed in community-building and to enmesh the Chinese gradually into a benign regional geopolitical framework (Goh [2005b](#)). But questions remain. Does bandwagoning with China for profit help other regional states succeed in building pluralistic security communities? Are non-liberal hegemonies such as China capable of compelling smaller states to jump on their economic bandwagons and to provide adequate leadership for this security enterprise?

It is argued here that liberal democracies have the most potential to succeed in transforming commercial interaction into more comprehensive security collaboration over time. The liberal norms they promote among themselves and project onto others serve as a powerful ideational force that nurtures a sense of 'community'.¹ The bridging of these norms with liberally oriented leadership further enhances pluralistic security community-building in a particular region. The United States adopted this premise in a post-Cold War context – and especially during the George W. Bush administration – to pursue the vision of a more liberal international security community binding different regions with common norms and values as its fundamental foreign policy objective. Historians have yet to make a final judgement on this quest. However, early indicators are that Asia-Pacific states have joined other groups of states around the world in condemning Washington for overstepping its liberal prerogative by applying force and raw power in lieu of more gradual normative instrumentalities to achieve its version of a liberal world order.

While some reference will be made in this chapter to US global aspirations to shape an international security community, most of the following analysis focuses on the Asia-Pacific dimension. Initially, commentary will be offered on how state 'typologies' – particularly those with democratic characteristics – link to factors of stability and peace that facilitate security community-building. The roles of liberal democratic norms and community leadership as key independent variables will be underscored and the 'liberal democratic peace' thesis will be assessed. The chapter then employs a 'case study' of what it argues is a potential 'Northeast Asian security community' of democratic states based on a predominance of democratic principles and community leadership – the US–Japan bilateral security relationship. Although bilateral in a formal sense, the security community-building aspects

of this relationship have become increasingly ‘regionalised’ since the end of the Cold War. They now constitute a potentially significant foundation for promoting Asia-Pacific security if it is managed in ways that avoid alienating Japan's neighbours (and especially China) during the interim.

A third section flows from this premise. Unless Asia-Pacific democracies such as the United States and Japan can identify more effective ways to shape and lead in implementing a *modus vivendi* on critical regional security issues with Beijing, the Korean peninsula and ASEAN, and until other major states become more democratic, there is little chance that a truly credible and enduring multilateral security community will emerge in this region along the lines envisioned by traditional security community proponents. It is appropriate to apply what is characterised here as ‘democratic realist institutionalism’ – based on liberal democratic norms (as opposed to national interests determined by rationalist state actors) and community leadership (provided by the most powerful democratic state within a security community, but not outside it or for non-democratic states) – as a preferred approach for initially accommodating and eventually integrating more autocratic political forces into the security community-building process.

Security communities

Before discussing how security community-building may relate to the Asia-Pacific and global security politics, the nature of those security actors most relevant to that process must be briefly identified and discussed. A growing literature on ‘transnational security’ has emerged over the past decade to complement the understandably strong obsession with international terrorism in a post-11 September world. States, however, continue to be the most critical unit of analysis in discussion about how security communities are envisioned and formulated. Neither al-Qaeda's vision of a transnational caliphate nor the perils of global climate change or pandemics that have generated greater calls for more coherent pan-regional policy responses by the United Nations or other inter-governmental organisations have yet matched the appeal or power of the state as an agent for affecting change in the contemporary international environment. Accordingly, the type of ‘state-centric’ groups that collaborate to form regional security communities is a critical aspect of overall international security politics.

In this context, the concept of anarchy as a core element of international

security politics embodies three distinct groups of states that may bind for security cooperation: Hobbesian, Lockean and Kantian (Wendt [1999](#)). States conforming to the Hobbesian scenario of anarchy are prone to forge alliances of 'collective-defence'. The security challenges states face in this scenario remain deeply rooted in human ambitions and international anarchy; states supposedly exist in the 'state of nature', in which the 'war of all against all' applies. In this Darwinist world, only the 'fittest' states survive. Military power remains the most important means of national security and balance-of-power or military-alliance systems the basic mechanism for ensuring national survival (Mearsheimer [1998](#): 336). Alliances thus remain viable and intact as long as sovereign states still face the same enemy (Wendt [1999](#): 301).

States may alternatively form Lockean collective-security regimes. In Lockean arrangements, states have a more relaxed view of their national security. They do not treat each other as enemies, but as partners who are capable of entering into social contracts with each other to enhance the interests and prosperity of their respective sovereign populaces. As in the Hobbesian world, anarchy still exists. Lockean anarchy, however, is one characterised by international relations based on two basic norms: *self-help* and *mutual help*. In this model, states are seen as growing mature and more prosperous without conflict. They are less anxious about their national survival and thus more secure than those under Hobbesian anarchy. They also tend to be pro-status quo and only respond to others' threats defensively. State behaviour rests largely on the logic of 'live and let live' based on the premise that states are legitimate actors. War is no longer considered 'natural', but as something that is avoidable or at least manageable. States only balance against aggression, a behaviour judged 'bad' by international law. Power remains central to collective security, but is managed through international institutions, which operate differently from military alliances. The collective-security regime rests upon the preponderance of collective power exercised by members of the international community (Kupchan and Kupchan [1998](#)).

Kantian states can go beyond forming collective-defence and collective-security regimes to construct 'security communities'. States instead see one another as 'friends' or 'team players' whose collective norms – namely, non-violence and altruism – guide their mutual relations. Such communities usually emerge in one of two forms: 'amalgamated' or 'pluralistic'. States wishing to build an amalgamated security community develop a vision for

common government. Members of such a security community forfeit their sovereignty in an effort to unify themselves through the establishment of a formal supranational organisation. According to Karl Deutsch and his academic associates, an amalgamated security community results from the 'formal merger of two or more previously independent units into a single larger unit, with some type of common government after amalgamation' (Deutsch, Burrell and Kann [1957](#): 6). Proponents of this community type cite the historical example of how the United States came into existence and expect the European Union (EU) to become the United States of Europe. Yet, amalgamation is less frequent than pluralism as a core trait of security community-building because the act of conceding sovereign prerogatives calls for a greater degree of power relinquishment by states accustomed to being the final arbiters of authority and accountability in modern international systems.

The basic feature of a pluralistic security community is that its members retain their sovereignty but develop a sense of collective identity and mutual loyalty that makes war between them unthinkable. One of the positive signposts indicating mutual trust among security community members is border demilitarisation, even though this process does not necessarily require complete disarmament. It only ends military preparations for war between neighbours and signals their non-aggressive intentions towards each other. They also reduce material resources to defend against each other (Shore [1998](#): 344). Members of such communities are not set completely free from pursuing any autonomy or competition for power or leadership among themselves. In this context, the term 'pluralistic military security community' is a more accurate descriptor, because states mainly develop reliable expectations for peaceful change in the military context.

Nor does it mean that such communities are bound to last unless at least two important conditions are met. These are, I argue, liberal democratic norms and community leadership. They constitute the two key independent variables for shaping an enduring pluralistic security community. A cultural identity shared by non-democratic or illiberal states may be helpful in facilitating a sense of cultural community (Huntington [1996](#); Kang [2003/04](#)), but this expectation by itself remains far from sufficient. The question remains as to whether shared liberal norms meet the requirements for states to build and maintain clearly viable security communities. Alexander Wendt, among others, remains agnostic about whether Kantian or republican states

are the only types of state that can internalise liberal norms of the democratic peace (Wendt [1999](#): 297). For him, 'self-restraint is the ultimate basis for collective identity and friendship [and] that the latter are rooted fundamentally...in respecting each other's difference' (Wendt [1999](#): 360).

But it remains difficult to sustain the argument that non-democratic states can effectively exercise self-restraint when their autocratic leaders tend to rely upon repressive means or apply such norms to the extent that help transform their institutions, such as military alliances, into security communities. I thus argue that 'community' is based not only on self-interest, but also on collective identity based on liberal norms. Non-liberal democratic states may cooperate with each other, but their form of cooperation is less likely to last and tends to conform to the Hobbesian logic of *self-interest* and *self-help*. Liberal democratic and non-democratic states can also enhance their cooperation based on the Lockean logic of *mutual interest*. Yet only liberal democracies can build and maintain genuine security communities, because of their shared liberal norms.

Non-democratic states may try to build 'pluralistic security communities' based on such norms as mutual tolerance and non-violence. The empirical evidence demonstrates, however, that these events have not been very successful. Non-democratic states in the Arab world, for instance, made efforts to form alliances among themselves based on 'pan-Arabism', but their collective identity was relatively weak. Heads of Arab states 'routinely paid lip service to the [non-democratic] ideals of pan-Arabism while engaging in power-seeking behavior' (Barnett [1996](#): 401). Pan-Arabism was supposed to give rise to a political community that defends Arabs wherever they may reside, works towards political unification and strengthens the bonds of Arab unity. Non-democratic states in the Arab world have sought to build security arrangements based on their norms of non-violence, consultation and compromise. But no one has ever considered any of their regional groups, most notably the Gulf Cooperation Council, as a genuine security community.

Concrete examples of security communities whose member states contain a mixture of democratic and non-democratic regimes are still largely absent. This at last partially explains why the two types of states may form security regimes, but do not identify each other as long-lasting or close friends or members of a security community. The dyadic democratic model shows that liberal democratic states do not really trust autocratic states or their military

allies that are not democratic. If both types of states are in a major crisis, liberal democracies may not even seek compromise through negotiation (Rousseau *et al.* [1996](#)). One obvious reason is that liberal democracies are no less prone to war against non-democratic states than the latter, which also have a strong record of waging war against each other. When disputes between liberal democracies and autocracies arise, the former may even escalate the ongoing tensions with the latter and initiate military hostilities against them (Dixon [1994](#): 18).

The 'liberal democratic peace' thesis has captured the attention of international relations theorists as an explanation for war avoidance and state-centric collaboration (Doyle [1997](#); Maoz and Russett [1993](#); Russett [1996a](#), [1996b](#)), based on such liberal norms as mutual tolerance, non-violence and peaceful conflict resolution. Jack Levy ([1989](#): 270) asserts that this theory is 'as close as anything we have to an empirical law in international relations'. Even some leading realists acknowledge that it has a positive impact on liberal democracy. Stephen Walt ([1995](#): 229), for instance, concurs that 'the extraordinary absence of warfare between democratic or republican regimes suggests that their domestic orders help reduce conflicts between them as well'. Barry Buzan ([1991a](#): 50–1) also views the norm of consensus on the need to avoid war and on economic liberalism as giving rise to security communities. The main strength of liberal internationalism lies in its empirical ability to prove that members of regional security communities have adopted liberal democracy and that non-democratic states have so far failed to form such communities or maintain them.

Various studies show that 'alliances between democracies...appear to be more durable' (Gaubatz [1996](#): 135), while others demonstrate that international security regimes with non-liberal members are less robust than those with liberal democratic members (Slaughter [1995](#); Slaughter Burley [1993](#)). Democracies 'perceive each other as peaceful because of the democratic norms governing their domestic decision-making processes' (Risse-Kappen [1996](#): 371) and thus tend to resolve their disputes in a manner short of war (Doyle [1986](#); Maoz and Abdolali [1989](#); Maoz and Russett [1992](#)). Two of the most important mechanisms for doing this are peaceful dispute settlement (non-recourse to war, negotiation and compromise) and legal equality (voting equality and certain egalitarian rights to human dignity) (Dixon [1994](#); Raymond [1994](#)). Among themselves, liberal states that adopt the norm of self-restraint and non-violence tend to favour negotiation and

compromise. They are highly institutionalised and thus tend to rely on *legal* means as the way to resolve conflict (Raymond [1994](#): 24).

Liberal democratic norms *per se* do not automatically turn states into security communities, however. Indeed, there is evidence that democratic states have almost gone to war against each other (Layne [1994](#)). Some constructivists have added another variable: liberal-social processes of mutual recognition and respect among democracies (William [2001](#)). From this author's perspective, the liberal norms of self-restraint and non-violence may prove important in the process of security community-building among democracies, but norms relatively more capable of promoting mutual trust among democratic states are the liberal values of political and racial equality (major elements of modern liberalism). Democratic state leaders who treat other states, including democracies, as politically or racially inferior do not have a clean record of self-restraint and non-violence.

For democratic norms to be observed effectively, they must also enjoy the support of powerful states that are democratic. This point goes beyond hegemonic stability theory proposed by neo-classical realists (Gilpin [1981](#); Wohlforth [1999](#)). John Ikenberry ([2001](#)) has argued that liberal hegemonies help institutionalise and stabilise international politics. Other leading constructivists believe material power matters, although they emphasise the positive images of powerful states, which helps explain the existence of Kantian communities. They view 'the development of a security community' as 'not antagonistic to the language of power; indeed, it is *dependent on it*' (Adler and Barnett [1998](#): 52, emphasis added). Another constructivist, Martha Finnemore ([1996](#): 30), further contends that 'norms, rules and routines...will serve the interests of powerful actors; they will not survive long if they do not'. A leading political realist, Walt ([1998](#): 43), also notes that 'constructivists admit that ideas will have greater impact when backed by powerful states and reinforced by enduring material forces'.

Because of their shared liberal norms and values (such as self-restraint and tolerance), democracies – whether powerful or weak – may cooperate with one another more effectively than autocracies. A powerful democracy tends to enjoy more legitimacy with other democracies than a powerful autocracy with weaker autocracies. This is because political leaders within *any* democracy tend to enjoy political legitimacy from their populations. Powerful democracies may find it easier to deal with other democratic states than with non-democratic ones and are thus more willing and able to provide

community leadership. Security communities can be maintained on the basis of such legitimacy.

One may wonder if a security community with more than one great power is less durable than one led by one single power. Reese ([2006](#): 11) contends that ‘the most stable possible situation for a security community would be to have a single great power among its membership’. This seems to be a reasonable proposition: security community-building requires a powerful liberal democracy capable of playing the role of a regional community leader (Peou [2001](#)). However, security communities involving multiple great powers and weaker ones may not be as volatile as Reese surmises and may not implode over the long run, if all of the member states remain democratic. If democracies continue to engage in the power-balancing game within security communities, they may help maintain rules of the ‘democratic game’ if none is capable of defying them. Balance-of-power politics among democracies may thus be stabilising (Peou [2007](#): 214; Raymond [1994](#): 29–30).

Power transition among liberal democracies should also be generally peaceful. One fundamental liberal norm in electoral politics is peaceful transfer of power between the incumbent and challenger. Evidence shows the same trend of leadership change among liberal democracies. On the one hand, this might be attributed to liberal democracies’ orientation towards supporting the status quo: namely, they enjoy more satisfaction with their positions than non-democracies in the contemporary international system, which tend to be revisionist (Brawley [1993](#); Kacowicz [1995](#); Rousseau *et al.* [1996](#)). Other studies show that rising democracies prove less likely to escalate war against leading democracies, or even less likely than autocracies to become revisionist, and thus less likely to use force to challenge the status quo (Huth and Allee [2003](#)). Even realists who normally regard anarchy and war as the natural state of things suspect that this may be the case (Buzan [1991a](#): 36; Wohlforth [1999](#): 34). On the other hand, leading democracies on the decline prove far less likely than declining autocracies to wage preventive wars (Schweller [1992](#): 238). Together, leading and rising democracies make their power transition less prone to war – contrary to what some realists assume (that is, when challenged from below, hegemons resort to preventive war).²

Several caveats regarding the notion of democratic community leadership must be underscored here. First, the arguments above only apply to

democratic members within security communities. Powerful democracies do not necessarily enjoy political legitimacy among non-democratic states and may be unable to lead them. Second, democracies may still pursue different non-military interests when dealing with states outside their communities. Third, the strongest democratic state within a security community may still invite counter-‘hegemonic’ politics as political realists tend to suggest (Waltz [1962](#)). However, the exercise of power by the leading democracy would generate much less of such balancing. In other words, power-balancing within security communities will not disappear completely but are far less prone to war. Adler ([1997](#): 255) makes clear that ‘the existence of security communities does not mean that interest-based behavior by states will end, that material factors will cease to shape interstate practices, and that security dilemmas will end’. Neither should anyone else believe that members of security communities will be completely set free from balance-of-power/threat politics.

In short, this chapter softens political realism by incorporating insights from democratic (or Kantian) liberalism and social constructivism, but questions the more radical type of constructivism that rejects liberalism and celebrates difference (Möller [2003](#)). As discussed in the following section, radical constructivism (or postmodernism) proves unhelpful when contending that pluralistic security communities can be established even if states and societies do not share any liberal democratic norms and even if there are no core liberal states to provide community leadership.

Japan and the United States: a dyadic security community?

If the criteria discussed above are applied consistently, it may be concluded that the Japan–US security alliance has now evolved into a pluralistic military-security community. Sceptics may find this thesis unconvincing, because they still regard the US–Japan security relationship as more of a traditional military alliance than a security community. In their view, the bilateral military alliance is maintained because it is still based on a shared perception of a common threat to their national security and will collapse when the threat disappears. David Rapkin ([2001](#): 399), for instance, argues that ‘US and Japanese interests have never been entirely harmonious, but the security exigencies of the Cold War placed a premium on suppressing parochial interests to ensure cooperative solutions.’ He adds that, ‘absent

such motivation to subordinate conflicts of interest, the cooperative basis of the relationship – and thus also the political foundations for any sort of shared leadership – has deteriorated’.

Others also argue that Japan has now actively sought to enhance its national autonomy by hedging American constraints on its foreign policy or by reducing the risks of US entrapment within the context of military bilateralism. According to T. J. Pempel (2004: 29), ‘after the many trade frictions of the mid- to late-1980s, Japan was anxious to reduce its dependence on the United States and also on those global multilateral organizations in which US influence was overwhelming’. Both Christopher Hughes and Akiko Fukushima (2004: 60) observe that Japanese multilateralism clearly serves as an option that proves ‘capable of countering exclusive security dependence on the United States’. Japanese multilateralism thus seems to further ensure greater Japanese independence from the United States, which tends to favour multilateralism in the context of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC).

A counter-argument to those who insist US and Japan bilateral relations are only an alliance as opposed to a security community does exist. A ‘community’ does not require multilateralism as one of its preconditions if a single great power interacts with another state in ways consistent with other security community characteristics. Japan can be regarded as a new, if not a mature, security community partner of the United States because: (1) it is evolving towards ‘normal power’ status in the aftermath of the Cold War; and (2) its interactions with the United States spill over to have both regional and global ramifications on their own merits rather than as primarily a response to a mutually perceived threat. Even realist-inclined scholars have now acknowledged the presence of a bilateral security community in which Japan and the United States are members, although they tend to couple the US–Japan dyad into a larger transregional context to include Europe. Barry Buzan and Gerald Segal (1998: 109), for instance, have observed that ‘the Atlantic community and Japan have established an interdependent security community’ (see also Reese 2006: 29–32). The US–Japan security dyad constitutes a powerful component of what was originally known as the ‘Trilateral Commission’ but which has more recently found expression with Japan as a key Pacific contact country in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) consultative mechanisms for managing its approaches to contemporary global security challenges (Daalder and

Goldgeier [2006](#): 106; Zoellick, Sutherland and Owada [1999](#)).

Although Japan and the United States arguably transferred this alliance to a pluralistic military-security community in recent years, it does not mean that it is now a mature one. Although a democracy, Japan has become noticeably more 'liberal' only in the 1990s and is still not as liberal as the United States. Japan is known for having embraced 'developmental statism', which is not compatible with the type of laissez-faire capitalism found in the United States, and Tokyo even sought to block trade and investment liberalisation in the East Asian region (Rapkin [2001](#)). Divergent or competing economic interests may still continue among members of a pluralistic military-security community, of course, and such a community still exists as long as the member states do not engage in military competition against one another.

A recent trend in US–Japan security community-building is the incremental or low-key expansion of the dyadic core to include a wider spectrum of strategic partnerships based on commonly held democratic values. The Australia–Japan–US Trilateral Security Dialogue (TSD) is a case in point. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, moreover, sought throughout 2006–7 to promote a quadrilateral security dialogue with Australia, India and the United States and even proposed the establishment of an Arc of Freedom and Prosperity (although it did not materialise). Japan's *Diplomatic Bluebook 2007* in particular calls for the strengthening of strategic partnerships with other liberal democracies, such as Australia and India (Japan, Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2007). When he took office in September 2007, Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda further sought to strengthen the US–Japan alliance. All this runs contrary to the prediction by structural realists that Japan is more likely to balance against US power by joining other less powerful states such as China because of their shared perception of a common threat from the most powerful state in the international system.

Why both Japan and the United States can now be considered a security community can thus be explained in different ways. Reese suggests that material power alone matters exclusively. For instance, he makes a realist prediction that when Japan becomes a normal great power, its new status will alter the US–Japan security community: 'Japan is beginning to assert a new identity resembling that of a normal great power. If this transformation does take place, the future of this [security community] relationship is unlikely to resemble the past' (Reese [2006](#): 32). In other words, 'this [dyadic security] community will begin to rupture' (Reese [2006](#): 33). Although they do not

touch on the two states in the context of a bilateral security community, Buzan and Wæver also make the case that these two states would have to have developed a generalised fear of 'back to the future' (Buzan and Wæver [2003](#): 353), as well as 'a strong shared view of the status quo, a shared culture and/or well-developed institutions'. In their view, 'democracy may not be a necessary condition but, as suggested by the democracy and peace literature (and by the empirical cases to date), it is a huge asset' (Buzan and Wæver [2003](#): 173). Some social constructivists also question the effects of democratic norms on the social process of security community-building. They imply that if the US–Japan alliance has indeed become a security community, it is primarily because the two states have engaged in the process of socialisation. They thus stress the importance of informal and formal dialogue between leaders of the two states as an effective way to change preferences and interests (Katzenstein and Okawara [2001/02](#): 181).

These explanations have some merit, but still leave open why security community members can effectively develop a strongly shared view of the status quo as well as a shared culture and/or well-developed institutions. In this context, democratic states can meet these conditions much better than non-democratic ones. If the EU and NATO have been transformed into security communities, it is because their member states had first become democratic. Moreover, as explained earlier, democratic states also tend to favour the status quo, to share liberal cultural values or norms, and to develop complex state, political and civil society institutions. Socialisation may also help develop a collective sense of community, but socialisation among democracies is likely to achieve this result far better than that among autocracies.

Two key independent variables help explain why: namely, democracy and the role of the United States as leader of their security alliance. Both Japan and the United States initially shared a common perception of the Soviet threat during the Cold War and the potential threat of China in more recent years. But sharing common perceptions of Soviet, Chinese and North Korean threats alone would not build a sense of community between both Japan and the United States. However, liberal democracy clearly does have pacifying effects on the two democratic states' mutually directed policy behaviour. One may observe that Japan has never been a true liberal democracy. By and large, however, most observers accept the fact that Japan has (since the end of the Cold War) now become more liberal in its democratic politics. Recent

events, including the Japanese Opposition Party's capture of power in the upper house of Japan's Diet, attest to the growing robustness of that country's political democracy.

There is a qualitative difference of policy behaviour between Japanese decision-makers before and after the Second World War, especially after the end of the Cold War. Before that conflict, Japanese military and civilian leaders may have reached consensus on the need for total war (Snyder [1991](#)), but did not share strong democratic norms with American leaders. Since the end of the Second World War, especially after the end of the Cold War, Japanese and American citizens and their elites have regarded their countries as friendly allies, rather than strategic rivals or adversaries. By and large, Americans and Japanese have learned to regard each other in a positive light. In spite of evidence indicating some Japanese resentment of US externally directed policies (such as the US war on terrorism, which enjoyed the support of only 26 per cent of Japanese respondents in 2006, down from 61 per cent in the summer of 2002), a poll by the Pew Research Center released in June 2006 still shows that only 29 per cent of Japanese respondents perceived the United States as a danger to world peace and 82 per cent of them gave the American people 'favorable marks, up from 73 per cent in 2002' (Pew Research Center [2006](#): 11).³ For their part, 66 per cent of American respondents favoured Japan, up from 63 in May 2005 and 62 in August 1998 (Pew Research Center [2006](#): 34).

Japanese and American officials have also maintained close political and military ties; indeed such ties have been increasingly cordial over the past decade (with the relationship between President Bush and Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi highly illustrative).⁴ It is now viewed as a matter of course that Japan's head of government will attend and interact meaningfully at most important Asia-Pacific and international summits and will be among those first consulted when the US initiates military interventions or other exercises of 'hard power'. Japan's support for such ventures is 'expected' by Washington, but is hardly taken for granted.

Democratic community leadership defined in political, economic and military terms has also been critical to the recent development of the bilateral US–Japan pluralistic security community. The contrast that can be drawn before and after the Second World War is stark. Japanese militarism in the 1930s eroded the new liberal democratic norms defined by Woodrow Wilson's Nineteen Points and eventually pushed Japan into aggressive action

and the Second World War. The postwar US occupation gave rise to what both John Ikenberry and Charles Kupchan ([1990](#): 304) call 'internal reconstruction', helping turn Japanese militarism into pacifism and authoritarianism into democracy through military, political and social reforms.

Japan's military dependence on the United States has therefore remained substantial in the postwar era and into the present time. This condition, however, actually underwrote the process of security community-building between these two states. Japan's military dependence on the United States remains indispensable for its security. Tokyo continues to finance the US military presence (over \$4 billion per year) and spends annually an additional \$1.5 billion on other security activities, such as having deployed its troops in Iraq in support of the US forces. This does not suggest that Japan's reliance on the United States is totally subservient. In 2006, Japan withdrew its troops from Iraq. It maintains positive ties with Iran and tense relations with South Korea (America's other main Northeast Asian ally). But Japan continues to be strategically dependent on the United States for its own national security.

Japan may now be on its way to becoming a normal great power, but the US–Japan security community is likely to remain durable. Reese's prediction – that Japan as a normal great power will cause the US–Japan security community to disintegrate – could well turn out to be true. As noted, balancing behaviour continues among member states within security communities. It is surmised here that this bilateral security community may become less stable when Japan becomes a normal great power and seeks to enhance a policy position more independent from that of the United States, but will still survive as long as the two states remain democratic. Less asymmetrical power relations represented by Japan's gradual emergence as a 'normal power' pursuing explicit strategic interests more independently could ironically lead the US–Japan dyad to become a more explicit security community in the long run. This is because Japanese defence burden-sharing in future contingencies where US power is applied to strengthen democratic norms will become increasingly valued in Washington.

A key question here is whether any further strengthening of the US–Japan security community dyad can 'spill over' into neighbouring regional sectors. Whether the United States can bring South Korea on board to develop a trilateral security community, for example, remains highly doubtful given recent South Korean overtures to reach out to its North Korean neighbour and

the intensification of nationalism in that country. The 2006 missile tests by North Korea put both Japan and South Korea on different paths. One reason lies in the fact that South Koreans tend to see North Koreans as ‘long-lost brethren, objects of pity, sources of kitsch, or targets of ridicule – but rarely enemies’ (*International Herald Tribune*, 12 July 2006: 3) and prefer reconciliatory options. Japan, however, has wanted tougher actions, including the possibility of pre-emptive strikes on North Korea, which infuriated Seoul.⁵ The recent initiative to forge a TSD between Australia, Japan and the US, however, may have more significant long-term implications for community-building, given the three affiliates’ common democratic values and marketing interests (Tow *et al.* 2007).

An Asia-Pacific security community: possibility or pipe dream?

That states in the Asia-Pacific have not yet formed a security community can be explained by the absence of consensus on key democratic norms, such as self-restraint, peaceful conflict resolution, equality, consent and compromise. Evidence exists that the presence of non-democratic states and lack of democratic community leadership make it extremely difficult for states to create a security community.

It would be unfair to make the argument that non-democratic states in the region have never adopted any liberal norms. Some constructivists would remind us that ASEAN adopted these norms, even though only a few of them have become truly ‘democratic’.⁶ Still, they have yet to form a genuine security community. This does not undermine the reality that ASEAN has made some positive moves towards doing so in recent years. In 2003, the ASEAN leaders adopted the Declaration of ASEAN Concord II or Bali Concord II, which includes the concept of an ASEAN security community. The regional group further adopted the Vientiane Action Programme 2003–10 to help realise this vision and institutionalised an annual ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting to improve cooperation in the field of defence and security. On 9 May 2006, ASEAN held the inaugural meeting of its defence ministers in Kuala Lumpur and then convened the first ASEAN Defence Ministers Retreat on 23–25 March 2007, in Bali. An ASEAN Charter, embodying majority voting formulas and other liberal principles for managing that organisation, was ratified by all members during 2008.

Although ASEAN may have become a ‘nascent security community’ as

Amitav Acharya ([2001](#)) contends, most observers still do not characterise the regional group as a security community. Kavi Chongkittavorn ([2007](#): 9), a leading journalist in Thailand (who used to work at the ASEAN Secretariat), recently made the following observation: 'It is doubtful if ASEAN can realize its plan to establish the security community...by 2015 as planned.' He offers one major reason for this challenge: the ASEAN leaders have yet to agree 'on what kind of dispute settlement mechanisms' will apply. He then adds that, 'while the dispute settlement mechanisms in the economic arena are already in place, those related to security, social and cultural issues are harder to formulate'.

The lack of optimism regarding the future potential of ASEAN as a genuine regional pluralistic security community has less to do with the limits of socialisation among the member states within the group, but more to do with the extreme fragility of what democratic institutions they have developed. The 'ASEAN way' has so far proved inadequate in terms of helping transform the group into a stable regional security community. Ali Alatas, Indonesia's most famous foreign minister, recently conceded that ASEAN leaders have never been 'short of good ideas'. But in his view, 'it is their implementation' that is the problem. Beneath the ASEAN inability to implement 'good ideas' lies one persistent fact: ASEAN leaders still do not have a 'regional mindset' due to their fear of a loss of national identity. He further acknowledged that the 'different political systems' made it difficult for ASEAN leaders to 'push for political convergence' (*AsiaViews*, July–August 2007: 14, 15).

Hostility and tension between non-democratic and democratic states have so far hindered ASEAN members from intensifying their security community-building. ASEAN is no longer quite a 'club of dictators', as it has often been labelled by its critics, but only three ASEAN states – Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand (before the military coup on 19 September 2006, which temporarily put Thai democracy on hold) – can be considered democracies. Indonesia is still consolidating its democratic gains. Cambodia remains a poor candidate for consolidated democracy. Malaysia and Singapore are semi-authoritarian or electoral autocracies. Brunei remains an absolute monarchy. Myanmar remains under the thumb of its military junta. Laos and Vietnam claim to uphold Marxism-Leninism. With Thailand, the Philippines and Indonesia becoming more democratic and a number of autocratic states joining ASEAN, the political rift between the two types of

states apparently widened.

More centrally, the non-democratic states in ASEAN still pose a powerful challenge to the process of turning the group into a security community. The member states have formally agreed to establish a human rights commission, but this came after much disagreement among them and there is still no clear timeframe for its implementation. The September 2007 violent crackdowns on protesters in Myanmar by the junta government, for instance, further complicated regional efforts to build collective or shared norms among the ASEAN states. Differences between the democratic and non-democratic members have narrowed only slightly. They still regard each other as rivals.

Beyond ASEAN, non-democratic (including socialist) states have been no more successful – and arguably less so – than their Western counterparts in maintaining, much less building, military alliances or security communities. The military alliances between socialist states in East Asia – most notably the Soviet Union, China and Vietnam – did not outlast the Cold War. The Russian–Vietnamese military alliance formed in the late 1970s has now ceased to exist. No new military alliances between socialist states have emerged, although the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation may yet become one. Vietnam behaves more or less according to balance-of-threat logic (against China) by moving closer to the more powerful democracy (the United States) rather than according to balance-of-power logic, which predicts that Vietnam would form a military alliance with China to balance the preponderance of US power.

Still much evidence from the Asia-Pacific further suggests that non-democratic states have been prone to challenge militarily powerful democracies, even with little expected benefits from war. The Second World War, the Korean War, the Vietnam War and intermittent crises in the Taiwan straits all illustrate this point. Non-democratic states have since continued to distrust and resist democratic ones. The 1996 Taiwan strait confrontation precipitated by Chinese pressure against nationalist Taiwanese politicians and the 2006 nuclear launches by North Korea directed against Japan and its hostilities towards the United States further confirm that non-democratic states are at least as likely to initiate crises or the use of military force against democratic states. China, in particular, remains deeply resentful of Western attempts to promote a ‘peaceful evolution’ within its sovereign or national boundaries. China's ongoing support for highly autocratic regimes in Myanmar and North Korea, serious challenges to democratic institutions in

Thailand and in the Indochinese states, and even still strong security dilemmas between Malaysia and Singapore – states where one political party has long dominated internal politics – all attest to the outstanding barriers impeding stronger linkages between democracy and community-building.

Meanwhile, Southeast Asia in particular, and the Asia-Pacific region in general, continues to show a serious lack of community leadership. ASEAN still has the potential to transform itself into a multilateral security community, if Indonesia proves itself capable of leading the way. A young but unstable democracy, that country – the largest ASEAN state that used to provide de facto leadership – has begun to move in this direction. Since it became more democratic in the late 1990s, Indonesia has, through ASEAN auspices, taken the initiative to build a security community in this region. However, it still faces serious domestic problems that prevent it from becoming the leading regional power. In spite of its desire to solidify its position in the driver's seat in the process of regional community-building in East Asia, therefore, ASEAN has proved unable to provide leadership. As a group of small and middle powers, ASEAN simply cannot expect to lead other greater powers, most notably China, Japan, Russia and the United States.

Within the broader Asia-Pacific region, the United States also has never made a serious effort to build a regional security community apart from cultivating the aforementioned US–Japan bilateral relationship. One reason for this may have much to do with its historical and cultural treatment of Asian societies (arguably due to the persistent lack of shared liberal democratic values within this region) (Duffield [2001](#); Hemmer and Katzenstein [2002](#)). During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, for instance, American decision-makers developed patronising attitudes towards Asian polities, many of which were still struggling with the throes of European colonisation until after the Second World War. Christopher Hemmer and Peter Katzenstein link this sense of cultural superiority to an explanation of why there is no NATO or a multilateral security community in Asia, arguing persuasively that American policy-makers did not treat their Asian allies on equal terms (political, cultural or racial). ‘America's potential Asian allies...were seen as part of an alien and, in important ways, inferior community’ (Hemmer and Katzenstein [2002](#): 575; Duffield [2001](#)). European allies were identified by US policy-makers as trustworthy, because of their shared religion, democratic values and common race. In contrast, the norm of

cultural, religious and racial inequalities identified by ‘condescending’ US policy-makers led many of them not to regard ‘Asians as ready or sufficiently sophisticated to enjoy the trust and the same degree of power that the United States had offered to European states’ or not to ‘take them very seriously’ or even to ‘regard them as inferiors’ (Hemmer and Katzenstein [2002](#): 597, 598). As a consequence, American leaders until recently took East Asia far less seriously than Europe. Former US Secretary of State Dean Acheson, for instance, ‘visited Europe at least eleven times’, but claimed that he was ‘too busy to make even a single visit to East Asia’ (Hemmer and Katzenstein [2002](#): 597).

Until China and other autocratic regimes become more democratic and liberal, the United States will be both unwilling and unable to provide leadership for regional security community-building. The Bush administration's 2006 *National Security Strategy* perhaps unconsciously demonstrates this: ‘Asian nations that share our values can join us in partnership to strengthen new democracies and promote democratic reforms throughout this region. This institutional framework, however, must be built upon a foundation of sound bilateral relations with key states in the region’ (cited in Cossa [2007a](#): 4). This seems to imply that US leadership depends on the sharing of democratic values, as well as the willingness of other democracies to follow.

Evidence further shows that non-liberal democratic hegemons in the Asia-Pacific have done much worse than liberal democratic ones: the former, for instance, have never contributed to security community-building in East Asia. The region has a long history of alternation between anarchy and (non-democratic) hegemony (Gills [1993](#)). In ancient China, there were 3,790 recorded wars from the Western Zhou (c. 1100 BC) to the end of the Qing dynasty (1911). In the Ming period, the average number of external wars per year was 1.12 (Johnston [1995](#): 27). After having achieved unification during the Qin and Han dynasties, China became expansionist when its emperor began to incorporate the ‘barbarians’ of present-day southern China down to Guangzhou (Canton) and to the northern part of contemporary Vietnam. China occupied Korea (108 BC–AD 313) and Vietnam for about 1,000 years (from 111 BC to AD 939). The Chinese Empire maintained regional stability for hundreds of years (from approximately 1300 to 1900 AD) and did so by exerting both material and cultural influence. The Chinese world order was preserved for centuries by the strength of the Chinese civilisation as well as

by military force (Zhao [1997](#): 19, 23). China was a ‘world empire’ without rivals in the region for many centuries, with Chinese leaders characterising those whom they subjugated as ‘barbarian’ or inferior.⁷

States under Chinese suzerainty, however, did not unconditionally accept Chinese illiberal hegemony and this legacy helps explain why the idea of a security community in an intra-regional context remains so elusive.⁸ There is certainly no evidence suggesting that this suzerainty system helped build a security community. Japan, for instance, sought to escape from the Chinese sphere of influence and even waged war to do so in 1895. Its decision to enter the Western world was driven by the need to counter the China-centred tributary system.⁹ Paying tribute to the Chinese emperor was seen by Japan as ‘a sign of submission’. Japan's absorption of Western technology and its drive for modernisation rested on the need to cope with Chinese influence. According to Takeshi Hamashita ([1997](#): 129), ‘the course of Japan's modernization has been studied as a process of overcoming its subordination to Western powers’. But ‘the main issues in Japanese modernization were how to cope with Chinese dominance over commercial relations in Asia’ and ‘how to reorganize relations among Japan, China, Korea, and Liu-chi’iu (Ryukyu) in a way that put Japan at the center’ (Hamashita [1997](#): 128).

A more democratic China would not challenge regional peace and stability as does the current undemocratic version. While there is no concrete evidence to predict how a democratic Chinese state would behave and how other states would respond, we have better evidence to suggest that democratic Chinese leadership would be more acceptable to democratic states than autocratic leadership. The region-wide shock to events in Tiananmen Square in June 1989 crushed the widespread hope that China's democratic forces might prevail as generational change swept that country. The old veterans of the Long March and the Chinese civil war who constituted the front ranks of Chinese military autocracy ultimately prevailed. Taiwan has made it clear it will not willingly be absorbed by a Chinese autocracy and continues to press ahead with its own version of liberal democracy, largely in search of an international democratic guarantee against the China threat. South Korea trades extensively with China but still develops a robust liberal democracy for pursuing its own political destiny. ASEAN's increasing impatience with a Chinese-backed authoritarian military government in Myanmar signals an increasing realisation by most Southeast Asian states that economic modernisation will inevitably lead to political liberalisation in their own

societies. China's own political liberalisation is glacial but still evident. Only when the Chinese Communist Party acknowledges that such liberalisation must ultimately and inevitably change how politics works inside China, however, will prospects for a multilateral security community in the Asia-Pacific become something more than a pipe dream.

Conclusion

This chapter has argued that Asia-Pacific security community-building is possible, but only if at least two conditions – liberal democratic norms shared by regional states and the expansion of democratic community leadership throughout the region – are met. This does not suggest that the shared perception of a common threat among democracies matters little, but this perception alone would only allow regional states to function as Hobbesian military alliances. This chapter further challenges the thesis asserting that security community-building does not necessarily require liberal democratic values and a core liberal state to provide leadership. The Asia-Pacific experience shows that neither common nor compatible values provide powerful binding glue if they are illiberal or autocratic and that liberal values alone remain insufficient for pluralistic security community-building and maintenance.

Material factors alone do not automatically prevent states from pursuing the task of security community-building and maintenance. Ideational factors that underpin liberal democracies are more likely to encourage such a process. In the Asia-Pacific, the US–Japan alliance validates this axiom by functioning as a bilateral security community and by evolving into a more regionally based element for shaping the security politics of other Asian states. Analogical evidence shows that non-democratic states are least likely to turn their short-term or temporary military alliances into security communities. Democratic and non-democratic states (that is, ASEAN) may also try to build a security community, but their ties are often constrained because their levels of mutual trust remain low. The recent violent crackdowns on protesters by the junta regime in Myanmar, for instance, led to a crisis in ASEAN, where at least some member states showed great displeasure with what happened under this military dictatorship. Overall, electorates and political elites in democratic states tend not to project norms of compromise and consensus to non-democratic states, especially on

security matters.

Democratic community leadership also matters significantly. ASEAN will not become a genuine security community until all of its states are democratic and one of its member states becomes a powerful democratic state capable of leading the way. The argument that democratic leadership brings more harm than help is generally misleading. Washington's democratic leadership has acted mostly as a balancer and a guarantor on behalf of other regional democracies in ways that have been instrumental in preventing both democratic and non-democratic states hostile to each other from going to war. The US military presence in Northeast Asia has done much, for example, to prevent China from launching offensive attacks on Taiwan. The role of the United States as the still acknowledged leader among Asia-Pacific democracies must not be overlooked, either. The fact that territorial disputes between South Korea and Japan did not escalate into armed conflict may also be attributed to the United States being the common senior ally to its two Asian democratic allies that, nevertheless, view each other as long-standing rivals.

It has already been emphasised here that an eclectic approach to security community-building drawing upon insights from the Hobbesian, Lockean and Kantian theoretical perspectives constitutes 'democratic realist institutionalism'. The application of power politics between democracies as well as between democracies and other types of states will continue indefinitely, but democratic cultural norms tend to mitigate those dynamics most conducive to conflict or war. Within their orbit, democracies may seek compromise to their differences in ways that reinforce the notion that war between them is unthinkable and maintain faith in the fairness of democratic processes as they are played out in each other's political systems. Asian democracies appear to have followed a similar trend: Japan and South Korea will hardly fight a war while both are confronted with a far more threatening and autocratic North Korean regime armed with weapons of mass destruction and requisite delivery systems. Nor are Australia and a burgeoning democratic Indonesia as likely to confront each other as to collaborate against forces of international terrorism that have increasingly threatened both of them.

Given this context, a tentative theoretical proposition formulated for further empirical testing is as follows: a security community is what democratic states and their community leaders – democratic states and their

leaders alone – can make of it. If this proposition can be validated through examining empirical evidence, ‘democratic’ (rather than political) realist institutionalism as an eclectic theory of security community-building can be eventually operationalised and applied to reach greater understanding on such communities’ formulation, maintenance and application. Of course there is a remote prospect that a security community will come into being but that its member states share no democratic norms notwithstanding the presence of a powerful democratic member in their midst. Or democratic states might share norms and have a powerful state in their midst, but still not realise a true security community. Neither outcome seems as likely, however, as mutual democratic cultures and practices leading to greater trust and affinity and higher probabilities of a regional security community evolving as a result of such feelings. That scenario still seems the most visionary and promising model for Asia-Pacific states to pursue in their quest for more regional stability and for a greater standing within the international system at large.

¹ Democratic ‘identity’ may not be as strong as democratic ‘norms’. Germany under Adolf Hitler, an elected and highly popular national leader well into the Second World War, did not share a sense of democratic identity with other Western democracies and then went to war against them.

² According to realists, history shows that power transition among great powers appears to be dangerously prone to war. Robert Gilpin ([1981: 209](#)), for instance, observes that ‘there do not appear to be any examples of a dominant power willingly conceding dominance over an international system to a rising power in order to avoid war. Nor are there examples of rising powers that have failed to press their advantage and have refrained from attempts to restructure the system to accommodate their security and economic interests.’ However, Gilpin makes a subtle but profound remark about the difference between the United States, viewed as ‘tolerant’ and ‘un-oppressive’ and Germany. Great powers that operate on the basis of ‘shared values and interests’ account for peaceful change.

³ According to one Japanese scholar, ‘The United States has been by far the most favorite country of the Japanese, except at the height of the Vietnam War when Switzerland, with a peaceful image, ranked number

one' (Agakimi [2006](#): 3).

⁴ According to Jitsuro Terashima ([2006](#): 2), honorary chairman of the non-profit Japan Research Institute, 'The Koizumi Cabinet has been an unprecedented pro-American administration.'

⁵ On 11 July 2006, a spokesperson of President Roh Moo Hyun responded in anger, assailing Tokyo in the following words, 'We will strongly react to arrogance and senseless remarks of Japanese political leaders who intend to amplify a crisis on the Korean peninsula with dangerous and provocative rhetoric such as pre-emptive strikes... [which] exposed Japan's tendency to invade' (Choe [2006](#): 3).

⁶ States within APEC, the ASEAN Regional Forum and ASEAN have often been divided on democratic and human rights issues. Within APEC, the democratic members include Australia, Canada, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, the Philippines, South Korea, Taiwan and the United States, and, arguably, Thailand. The rest are either semi-democratic or fully anti-democratic.

⁷ Ming China's elites (1368–1644), for instance, regarded the Mongols as racially inferior, calling them “‘dogs and sheep’”, “‘not of our race’”, who ‘should be “rejected as animals”’ (Johnston [1995](#): 187).

⁸ David Kang argues that they did. He cites David Marr: “‘This reality [China's overwhelming size], together with sincere cultural admiration, led Vietnam's rulers to accept the tributary system’” (Kang [2003/04](#): 174–5). Japan's leaders, such as “‘The Tokugawa rulers tacitly acknowledged Chinese supremacy and cultural leadership in the East Asian world’” (Kang [2003/04](#): 175, citing Key-Hiuk Kim). Then, however, he provides evidence suggesting that Japan did seek to balance Chinese power when the latter weakened: ‘Centuries later, as the Ming dynasty began to weaken, the Japanese general Hideyoshi twice attempted to invade China through Korea (in 1592 and 1598)’ (Kang [2003/04](#): 175–6).

⁹ The Sino-centric tributary system was of a mercantilist nature. Tributary states had resisted Chinese hegemony, long before the Opium War, and subsequently adopted Westphalian international principles and methods and turned them against China (Hamashita [1997](#): 117).

9 Human security and global governance

Akiko Fukushima and William T. Tow

The growing prominence of the individual as a significant factor in international relations is a striking characteristic of contemporary world politics. Yet the role of the state remains critical to 'either reducing or exacerbating the underlying causes of threats to human security' (Lee [2004](#): 102). The extent to which 'traditional' state-centric, and 'non-traditional' people-oriented, approaches to security politics are being reconciled in the Asia-Pacific is an increasingly central component of that region's international relations.

Long-standing tendencies by elites within the region to favour the preservation of absolute national sovereignty over the well-being of the citizens who live within a state's boundaries and to prioritise the power of the state over human rights or 'good global governance' are softening in the aftermath of recent transnational security events such as the Asian financial crisis, the SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome) outbreak, bird flu epidemics and the Indian Ocean tsunami crisis. These events have threatened human safety and welfare across boundaries without regard to traditional security preoccupations by individual states. The importance of external military threats, structural changes that introduce new power balances, and competition over resources, ideology and faith remain critical to the 'regional–global security nexus'. However, they are increasingly subject to 'a mutually reinforcing dynamic between state, societal and individual security' (Hoadley [2006](#): 20; also see Michael and Marshall [2007](#): 10). If key regional and extra-regional powers fail to recognise this dynamic and manage its implications, the outlook for regional stability and prosperity will deteriorate substantially, and conflict will intensify at both the intra-state and inter-state levels.

This perspective constitutes our chapter's major argument. It will be developed in four sections. Recent trends in the Asia-Pacific that have most affected that region's states' and institutions' attitudes and policies towards human security will be assessed initially. Special emphasis will be assigned in a second section to Japan's experiences in this context, because that country has been a spearhead in developing and applying human security approaches as a part of its foreign policy. A third section will examine how

human security is becoming central within Asia-Pacific states' regional institution-building, and to what extent it can be linked to their postures towards worldwide international institutions (that is, the United Nations and the G8, or Group of 8). A final section will evaluate the prospects for regional security actors to successfully integrate the traditional and human security approaches to address future Asian security contingencies. We then nominate three 'preconditions' that must be present for such integration to be successful and two potentially beneficial outcomes. We will conclude by weighing the policy implications that our argument has for future regional security.

Human security and its Asia-Pacific context

The term 'human security' entered the lexicon of international relations over a decade ago, with its first appearance in the *Human Development Report 1994* produced by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP [1994](#)). The report discussed human security based on the views of the late Pakistani economist Mahbub ul Haq. Ul Haq argued that the world was entering a new era in which 'security of individuals, not just security of their nations' must be assigned greater predominance (cited in Bajpai [2000](#): 10). The *Human Development Report 1994* enumerates seven core aspects of human security: (1) economic security (freedom from poverty); (2) food security (freedom from hunger); (3) health security (freedom from disease); (4) environmental security (the availability of clean water); (5) personal security (freedom from fear of violence, crimes, drugs); (6) community security (freedom to participate in family life and cultural activities); and (7) political security (freedom to exercise one's basic human rights) (UNDP [1994](#): 230–4). These categories may be integrated into two broader human security categories: 'freedom from fear' and 'freedom from want'.

The *Human Development Report 1994* had immediate implications for the international policy community because it delineated a concept appropriate to the changes occurring in the security environment with increasing globalisation, the frequent eruption of civil and ethnic conflicts, and the emergence of new security threats going beyond the traditional framework of inter-state wars in the aftermath of the end of the Cold War. That framework had rested on the predominance of the nation-state as a collective unit of individuals. Threats to security during the Cold War were mainly external

threats to territories. It was incumbent upon states to protect their people from external aggression. Thus, states were the referent object of security as a 'necessary unit for the well-being and survival of any human group' (Buzan [1991b](#): 40). National security was achieved through the maintenance of individual or collective military defence capability. Balance of power arrangements came into play to deter possible attacks by maintaining military preparedness at a level comparable to that of a potential aggressor or aggressors.

Even though the *Human Development Report 1994* was viewed as a significant breakthrough in contemporary international security thinking, the individual human being as the referent object of security was not necessarily a new concept. Barry Buzan had argued three years prior that the basic unit of security had been understood to be the 'individual' since the Treaty of Westphalia (Buzan [1991b](#): 35–56). Attention to human survival, life and dignity has long been the baseline of the security debate. However, until the end of the Cold War, 'individual security' or 'human security' was seen through the prism of the state. What the *Human Development Report 1994* underscored so forcefully, however, was that states were capable of, and often do, abuse their power by violating human rights and the use of excessive policing and prosecution, and political suppression (UNDP [1994](#): 24). History abounds in cases in which states kill their own citizens.

Indeed, the idea of human security has been strongly contested with reference to classical security questions: security for whom, from what, and how? Various commentators, for example, have questioned whether human security could really match or supplant 'national security' as a key concept in international relations given that 'much human insecurity surely results from structural factors and the distribution of power, which are essentially beyond the reach of individuals' (Newman [2004](#): 358; see also Paris [2001](#)). Others questioned whether human security credibly embraced an endorsement to the use of force under the name of 'humanitarian intervention'.¹ Some asked whether it was simply human rights under the guise of a new phrase; others asked whether it was truly security of human development.

This scepticism over human security's conceptual autonomy meant that initial efforts to impose its underlying propositions into mainstream international relations were bound to face resistance. The *Human Development Report 1994* focused on human security, for example, to encourage its inclusion in the declaration issued by the UN World Summit on

Social Development held in Copenhagen in 1995. Unfortunately, this attempt failed. States represented at the summit did not endorse the term 'human security' due to the belief among some that it could potentially lead to indictment of their systems of domestic governance, in particular with regard to repression of their citizens. Despite the failure to bring the human security framework into the mainstream in Copenhagen, it was soon embraced as an integral part of 'foreign policy' by countries such as Japan, Canada, Norway and the Netherlands. It was also promoted by numerous international institutions, including the United Nations, as a new means of furthering global peace and security. The *Millennium Report* produced in 2000 by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, identified both freedom from want and freedom from fear as twin challenges for the international community, giving additional momentum to the global human security movement (Annan [2000](#)).

The idea of human security was also an initial 'hard sell' throughout much of the Asia-Pacific. Over the course of the decade following the publication of the *Human Development Report 1994*, Asian reaction to the human security concept was divided. When the concept was initially introduced, Asian governments, with the exception of those of Thailand and Japan, were guarded, and some were cool or even hostile towards the idea. This can be partially attributed to Confucian values. Such values tend to support hierarchical forms of government, a shared sensitivity to sovereign prerogatives and a strong tendency to assign greater weight to collective social norms over individual rights. Some countries, in particular China, have been concerned that human security would allow other nations or international organisations to interfere in domestic governance. Paul Evans ([2004](#): 263) has observed that 'East Asia is resistant to concepts of security that, in normative terms, have the potential to erode traditional conceptions of sovereignty.' The idea that sovereign governments have an inherent 'responsibility to protect' their citizens in ways that conform to norms defined by an 'international community' has been distinctly alien to many Asian nationalists. They view humanitarian intervention by outside powers acting on behalf of that community as nothing less than a direct challenge to their own authority to exercise national sovereignty under the pretext of 'correcting' perceived atrocities and aggression – a subjective and contested notion. The idea that outside forces could protect their citizens more effectively through reconstituting national institutions after invasion, and then immediately withdraw, seems incredible in the aftermath of the Korean and

Vietnam wars and, more recently, the US-led coalition of the willing's 'nation-building' campaign in Iraq.

If considered in this framework, the highly controversial 'Asian values' posture emanating from the statements and writings of respected Asian leaders and academics becomes more understandable. Many Asian political elites view as increasingly excessive Western tendencies to impose their own brand of human security which are not sufficiently sensitive to their own situation. Such tendencies appear to reflect little sensitivity towards potential intra-state vulnerabilities in the form of separatist movements, corruption and bureaucratic inertia, socio-political unrest and other challenges to nation-building.²

Over time, however, Asian countries have gradually become more positive about human security. This change in attitude has been triggered by various events: the 1997 Asian financial crisis, the 1999 SARS epidemic, outbreaks of avian flu, the Indian Ocean tsunami in 2004 and earthquakes in Pakistan (2005) and in China (2008). None of these developments represented a traditional security threat, but they all threatened the safety of large populations, were often transnational in nature and were beyond the control or remedial capacity of local authorities and institutions. As will be discussed below, this gradual change of Asian attitudes is reflected in the way the term 'human security' has been introduced into the official documents of Asian regional conferences and institutions.

Such changes reflect fundamental modifications in Asian perceptions of the human security approach. Several unexpected developments triggered them. The Asian financial crisis of 1997–8 graphically highlighted the problem of widespread poverty in a region experiencing the world's fastest economic growth. As the Commission on Human Security later observed, this development:

brought sudden political and economic turmoil to countries that had previously been enjoying steady economic growth. The social dislocation that resulted demonstrated what happens when a society lacks the mechanism to ensure its people employment, income and other social safety in times of crisis. (Ogata [2001](#): 7)

In December 1997, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) responded to the widespread physical and economic dislocations experienced, particularly in Thailand and Indonesia, by embracing some aspects of human

security into the Vision 2020 programme adopted by that organisation's heads-of-state summit in Kuala Lumpur (see Tow [2001b](#): 269–70). Other 'triggers' either occurred simultaneously or followed in rapid succession: famine and flooding in North Korea that killed between 2 and 3 million people; a serious haze crisis in Indonesia during 1997–8 from extensive forest and grass fires deliberately lit for land clearance that threatened the health of most Malaysians and all Singaporeans; the East Timor crisis of 1999 where human suffering was so great that any pretence of 'quick exit' military strategies by intervention forces was dropped in favour of those forces facilitating gradual social reconstruction; and the SARS crisis starting in southern China during early 2003. The most monumental Asia-Pacific disaster, of course, was the December 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami in which nearly 250,000 people were either killed or 'missing'. More recent episodes are nearly as daunting: flooding in Jakarta which left over 300,000 people homeless; equally serious flooding in Malaysia's state of Johor; the threat of avian flu intensifying in Indonesia and Vietnam; and the increasingly apparent effects of global climate change all exemplify the depth of contemporary human security threats.

The irony of arguably the world's most militarised region having little capacity to respond to these non-traditional security contingencies that affect millions of its inhabitants has not been lost on regional policy-making elites. A long-standing civil conflict in Aceh, for example, was soon terminated by a peace settlement as that Indonesian special territory's separatist movement and the Indonesian central government acknowledged mutual exhaustion and despair. Yet the pace and cohesion of responses at both the national and regional institutional levels still remain largely insufficient. As one observer has perceptively noted: 'One wonders how much more warning does it take for states to prioritise human security in their security agenda?...many states in...Southeast Asia are least prepared to cope with these complex humanitarian emergencies' (Caballero-Anthony [2007](#): 1).

Policy failure in meeting human security challenges within the region, moreover, has clear extra-regional ramifications. The long-term impacts of the previous Asian financial crisis were largely contained; it is unclear, however, in a world where markets, resources and socio-political instability are increasingly interdependent if the effects of a future collapse of China's economy, a terrorist attack against a major Japanese city, or an avian flu human transmission pandemic originating in Southeast Asia could be

quarantined to the source of origin. As Amitav Acharya ([2005](#)) has argued, today's human security threats are not restricted by geography, often occur suddenly and unexpectedly, and are actually enhanced by modernisation and globalisation. The sense of fear and uncertainty such episodes generate among populaces within and beyond the initial crisis area often exceed those experienced in conventional warfare.

This is a phenomenon that Acharya posits as reflecting the 'age of total fear' that characterises the early twenty-first century as opposed to the 'age of total war' of the second half of the twentieth century (Acharya [2005](#)). It also earmarks human security as an integral dimension of the 'regional–global security nexus' that must be effectively confronted and conceptualised as the Cold War moves into history.

The Japanese dimension

As the world's second largest economy, and as the only country to have experienced the horrors of nuclear war, Japan's role as a human security actor is a symbolic gauge of how credible and extensive that policy approach could be in the post-Cold War timeframe. In fact, the 'people-oriented' security concept was well suited to much of Japan's foreign policy style cultivated since the 1950s. Its commitment to overseas development assistance (ODA) flowed from its affinity with the plight of newly developing nations in Asia, as emphasised at the 1955 Bandung Conference, and its determination to pursue UN-centred diplomacy (Fukushima [1999](#): 54–7; Hook *et al.* [2005](#): 14). Successive Japanese governments have seized upon human security politics as an opportunity for Japan to establish an independent identity in an increasingly complex and multilayered international system. Japan has embraced human security as a policy initiative it can develop as its own and as an alternative means to humanitarian intervention for cultivating international political influence without transforming its peace constitution (Edström [2003](#): 221; Ford [2003](#): 187–91). A realist in international relations can view Japan as a significant practitioner of 'soft power' politics, applying human security tactics to project its values and interests in Asia and globally.

In this context, Japan has adopted a 'broader' view of human security compatible with that embraced by the UNDP. The term 'human security' was introduced to Japan by Foreign Minister (later Prime Minister) Keizo Obuchi. In May 1998, during a visit to Singapore, Obuchi made a speech focusing on

Japan's role in the aftermath of the Asian financial crisis. Obuchi emphasised compassion (*omoiyari*) for those hit hard by the crisis, such as the poor, the elderly and other members of vulnerable segments of the population. He indicated that Japanese ODA should be offered specifically to enhance the 'human security' of these vulnerable individuals (Obuchi [1998a](#)). Of note in this speech is that Obuchi used the Japanese phrase *ningen no anzen*, or 'human safety', in the Japanese version, but used the phrase 'human security' in the English version. In the same speech, Obuchi also proposed an 'intellectual dialogue on building Asia's tomorrow' to consider how more enduring peace and security could be realised in the Asia-Pacific and internationally (Obuchi [1998a](#)).

Obuchi became Japan's Prime Minister in July 1998. He delivered two substantive speeches six months later which established the Japanese government's now long-standing human security posture. In his first address, the Prime Minister spoke on the 'Asian crisis and human security'. Further developing his earlier approach to human security when foreign minister, Obuchi applied his *ningen no anzenhoso* policy, which literally means 'human security rather than human safety', in a wide-ranging context. He insisted that human security 'comprehensively covers all the menaces that threaten the survival, daily life, and dignity of human beings and strengthens the efforts to confront those threats' (Obuchi [1998b](#)). This interpretation of human security is essentially that maintained by the Japanese government today. In a second speech, entitled 'Toward the creation of a bright future for Asia', given about two weeks later in Hanoi, Obuchi spelled out his vision for the twenty-first century in Asia as 'a century of peace and prosperity built on human dignity'. In this address he outlined three areas of focus – the revival of Asia, an emphasis on human security and the further promotion of intellectual dialogues. Obuchi argued that Asia needed to emphasise human security 'to implement measures for the socially vulnerable who have been affected by the [1997] Asian economic crisis'. He also announced that Japan would establish a Trust Fund for Human Security in the United Nations worth 500 million yen (US\$4.2 million) (Obuchi [1998c](#)). By June 2005, this fund had grown to 31.5 billion yen or US\$279 million (interview with Kazuo Tase, Human Security Unit, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, New York, 3 July 2007). The Trust Fund has provided funding for close to 200 projects in a wide variety of areas ranging from education and health to post-conflict rehabilitation and poverty reduction.

These two speeches provided the foundation for Japan's ongoing human security agenda. As they demonstrate, while Japan shared the three major concerns that had ushered in the human security perspective – the impact of globalisation, the changed security environment after the end of the Cold War and the increase in the number of civil and ethnic conflicts – the immediate impetus for the accelerated linkage of human security to overall Japanese foreign policy was the 1997 Asian financial crisis. The impact of that crisis on Asia was immense. Foreign capital fled from Thailand and the crisis spread to Indonesia almost overnight. The economic catastrophe affected other Asian countries, most notably South Korea, with sudden economic downturns. During this time, Japan was criticised for not doing enough to assist the affected countries. The two speeches given by Obuchi in 1998 were, in a way, a response to these criticisms. Japanese activities in Asia to assist countries affected by the financial crisis were seemingly going unnoticed, and Obuchi put forward the term ‘human security’ as a way to highlight these activities and bundle them together.

Since Obuchi's sudden death from a stroke in May 2002, successive prime ministers have inherited human security as an element of Japan's foreign policy agenda, but have not been as equally passionate about implementing it. Notwithstanding this sporadic pattern of policy dedication, some notable benchmarks have emerged (see [table 9.1](#)). Yoshiro Mori's government proposed an International Commission on Human Security at the UN Millennium Summit in 2000 which subsequently developed into the Commission on Human Security (CHS). Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's comparatively long tenure as head of government (April 2001–September 2006) featured the application of human security and reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan as part of the American-led ‘global war on terror’. Self-Defence Forces personnel were also dispatched to Iraq to assist in reconstruction programmes. In his general policy speech to the Diet in January 2003, Koizumi referred to human security in the context of ODA reform and stated that ODA should be extended strategically, with a priority for human security, including such subject areas as stability and growth in Asia, post-conflict consolidation of peace and the environment.³ In April 2003, the Japanese government changed the name of budget item ‘Grant Assistance for Grassroots Projects’ to ‘Grant Assistance for Grassroots and Human Security Projects’ and increased the budget appropriation for this item from 10 billion yen to 15 billion yen, while the overall ODA budget was reduced. The

purpose behind this was to make this scheme easier to use as a tool to address the field of human security. Professor Makoto Iokibe, President of the National Defence Academy of Japan, has observed that Japan has laid the groundwork to become

Table 9.1 Chronology of Japanese activities related to the concept of human security

March 1995	Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama refers to 'human-centred social development' in his speech at the UN World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen.
December 1997	Foreign Minister Keizo Obuchi signs the Anti-Personnel Landmines Treaty at the Ottawa Signing Conference.
May 1998	Speech by Foreign Minister Keizo Obuchi in Singapore in which human safety is described as a social safety net for those living in the shadow of globalisation.
December 1998	Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi expresses his views on human security at the 'Intellectual dialogue on building Asia's tomorrow', hosted by the Japan Center for International Exchange, Tokyo. Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi announces the creation of the Trust Fund for Human Security in the United Nations (hereafter 'Trust Fund') in his policy speech, 'Toward the creation of a bright future for Asia', Hanoi.
March 1999	The Japanese government establishes the Trust Fund with a contribution of 500 million yen at the United Nations.
March 2000	6.6 billion yen is contributed to the Trust Fund by Japan.
July 2000	2.5 billion yen is contributed to the Trust Fund. The Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs hosts an International Symposium on Human Security in Tokyo.
September 2000	Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori announces the further expansion of the Trust Fund and the establishment of an International Commission on Human Security in his speech at the UN Millennium Summit.
January 2001	Sadako Ogata, formerly of UNHCR, announces the establishment of the Commission on Human Security during UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan's visit to Japan, as a follow-up to Prime Minister Mori's speech at the UN Millennium Summit.
March 2001	Approximately 1.5 billion yen is contributed to the Trust Fund.
August 2001	Approximately 7.7 billion yen is contributed to the Trust Fund by Japan.
January 2003	Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi visits Sri Lanka to promote Japanese assistance for the consolidation of peace, providing ODA prior to a peace agreement.
February 2003	4 billion yen contribution is made to the Trust Fund. An international symposium on 'Human Security – Its Role in an Era of Various Threats to the International Community' is held in Tokyo with the participation of the Commission on Human Security.
May 2003	The Commission on Human Security publishes its report, <i>Human Security Now</i> .
September 2003	The Advisory Board on Human Security is established to advise the UN Secretary-General on the management of the Trust Fund.
December 2003	The Japanese translation of <i>Human Security Now</i> is published. An international symposium is held in Tokyo, hosted by <i>Asahi Shimbun</i> , to commemorate the publication of the Japanese translation.
February 2004	3 billion yen is contributed to the Trust Fund by Japan.
July 2004	An International Symposium on Human Security focusing on national security <i>vis-à-vis</i> human security is hosted by <i>Yomiuri Shimbun</i> in Kyoto.

September 2004	3 billion yen is contributed to the Trust Fund by Japan.
May 2005	Ambassador Komano, in charge of human security, participates in the ministerial meeting of the Human Security Network as a special guest.
October 2005	APEC Human Security Seminar is held in Tokyo.
February 2006	Human Security Workshop held in Mexico City hosted by Japan and Mexico.
April 2006	Thailand hosts Human Security Seminar in Bangkok with OSCE.
June 2006	Ambassador Takasu, in charge of human security, participates in the ministerial meeting of the Human Security Network held in Bangkok as a special guest and proposes the creation of the Friends of Human Security.
October 2006	OSCE conference on human dimension holds a side event on human security.
March 2007	The first meeting of the Friends of Human Security held in New York.
April 2007	Senior Officials Meeting on Human Security held in Tokyo.
April 2007	The second meeting of the Friends of Human Security held at the United Nations in New York.
May 2007	Ambassador Takasu, in charge of human security, participates in the ministerial meeting of the Human Security Network held in Slovenia as a special guest.
April 2008	Fourth meeting of the Friends of Human Security is held at the United Nations.
May 2008	Thematic debate on human security is held at the UN General Assembly.
May 2008	Human Security Network Ministerial Meeting is held in Greece.

a key player in post-conflict reconstruction by linking peace-building and economic assistance (Iokibe [2003](#)).

While Koizumi linked human security rationales more closely to Japan's ODA policy, he was not really an enthusiastic supporter of the human security perspective. Indeed, Japan's efforts towards human security have been criticised as being too heavily biased towards 'freedom from want' and for not sufficiently reflecting other aspects of the human security concept. It has been suggested that the Japanese vision of human security is nothing more than a simple human development framework. Questions have also been raised as to whether Japanese aid policy managers have overcome suspicions of governments in targeted recipient states that ODA will be used to bypass their own authority and enhance direct Japanese influence with their own populations at their own expense (Sunaga [2004](#): 15).

Cognisant of such criticism, Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi took the initiative on 'the consolidation of the peace initiative', which calls for Japan

‘to provide support to benefit the local communities even before a formal peace agreement is conducted’ (Kawaguchi [2003](#)). Under this initiative, Japan committed to provide assistance for peace-building in Sri Lanka, and also hosted a conference on its reconstruction in June 2003. In this policy shift, Japan announced that it would provide assistance during a conflict if there was a good prospect for a peace agreement.

Furthermore, in his policy speech to the Diet in January 2008, Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda announced that Japan would be a ‘peace fostering nation’ which contributes to peace and development (Fukuda [2008](#)). A concrete policy to realise this was further delineated the same month by Foreign Minister Masahiko Koumura ([2008](#)) in a policy speech to the Diet entitled ‘Japan: A Builder of Peace’. The address exhibited a sensitivity to ongoing criticism of Japan's management of its ODA programmes as an alleged contribution to regional and international peace and stability. Koumura argued that Japan must be more proactive in managing such assistance with ‘a Japanese face’ in the formulative stages of peace-building – the immediate phases of shaping a post-conflict environment when security situations are still unstable and uncertain. Koumura also acknowledged that ‘Japan has until now been working towards the realization of peace and prosperity around the world through its ODA, as well as through its active participation in peacekeeping operations and other international peace activities.’ But it now had determined that it had to do more. Accordingly, Japan has started a pilot project to train more proficient peace-builders in Asia. Japan continues to work for peace through its ODA by strengthening economic infrastructure and by empowering local people through development projects. It has served notice, however, that it would now provide more extensive funding to promote disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration and peacekeeping training in their own right.

Given its recent efforts to direct development assistance to Afghanistan, Aceh, East Timor and Iraq, an argument has recently emerged that Japan is targeting its ODA in a more ‘militarised’ fashion reflecting a more distinct agenda of counter-terrorism and geopolitics (Koshida [2005](#)). One should note, however, that Japan has not provided funding to those peace-building efforts which may involve military components, but instead provides aid for activities which clearly lend themselves to peaceful purposes. This does not constitute militarisation of the Japanese ODA.

Humanitarian intervention has been a major cause of the divide between

Japan and Canada and Norway in the area of human security and an impediment to the nation's involvement in global cooperation on human security. This issue has even prevented Japan from participating in the Human Security Network created by Canada and Norway (Fukushima [2004](#): 4, 7–8).

Japan has yet to reconcile two fundamental motivations for projecting its highly active human security posture. It correctly identifies an opportunity for itself as a basically pacifist postwar state actor to establish a distinct national security identity within the expanding soft security and human security sectors of international relations. It cannot completely dissociate itself, however, from those powerful imperatives that have ultimately shaped its most fundamental approaches to international security: the American alliance and the essential priorities of responses to state-centric threats in the Asia-Pacific region.

Human security and institution-building

With the end of the Cold War and the commensurate diffusion of traditional preoccupations with state-centric threats, the role of international institutions was expected to grow in what President George H. W. Bush labelled the 'New World Order' (Bush [1991](#)). The agenda of the UN Security Council in the 1990s, for example, shifted to ethnic conflicts, genocide and peacekeeping. The communiqués released by the Group of Seven (later the G8) during this time likewise focused on non-state-centric security issues. The debate on security thus became oriented towards broader issues, including civil conflicts, ethnic cleansing, genocide, failed governance, poverty and transnational issues such as terrorism, infectious disease, environment degradation, human trafficking and drug trafficking, small arms and landmines. These were not necessarily 'new threats' as they certainly did exist during the preceding decades. What was new was that they were perceived as security threats that called for multilateral responses by a world of states hopefully ready to work through formal instrumentalities and institutions.

Given the nature of the concept, it was perhaps natural that a UN special agency, the UNDP, introduced the term 'human security' in 1994. During the decade of debate following its introduction, the term slowly made its way into international discourse. It was soon routinely employed in the

declarations of most key international organisations and summits. The concept remains most firmly nested, however, within the UN. Its inclusion into the ‘outcome document’ of the World Summit in 2005 is illustrative of the process leading to that result. The UN Secretary-General alluded to the term ‘human security’ in his *Millennium Report*. He also referred to the term in his recommendation for UN reform entitled *In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All* released in March 2005 in preparation for the UN World Summit (United Nations [2005](#)). The report of the Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change identified human security as a response to threats that were not imagined when the UN was created sixty years ago and one that it was essential for the UN to consider. The report specifically noted that:

The United Nations was created in 1945 above all else ‘to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war’ – to ensure that the horrors of the World Wars were never repeated. Sixty years later, we know all too well that the biggest security threats we face now, and in the decades ahead, go far beyond States waging aggressive war. They extend to poverty, infectious disease and environmental degradation, war and violence within States; the spread and possible use of nuclear, radiological, chemical and biological weapons; terrorism; and transnational organised crime. The threats are from non-State actors as well as States, and to human security as well as State security.

(United Nations [2005](#): Secretary-General's Statement)

However, human security has continued to generate debate in UN circles with respect to its precise meaning. It took nearly six years from the time the *Human Development Report 1994* was released for UN authorities to acknowledge that freedom from want and freedom from fear – the core principles of human security – were integral to the UN mission. In ‘We the peoples: the role of the United Nations in the 21st century’ – a key document released during the UN Millennium Summit in September 2000 – the UN Secretary-General emphasised a ‘human-centred approach to security’ to protect individuals from new forms of weaponry and warfare, often directed towards states’ own populations. The report concluded that an integrated approach to human security would be accompanied by the promotion of human rights and the reduction of ethnic vulnerability (McClean [2006](#): 56). Such aspirations were at least partially undercut, however, by the weakness

and constant bickering of the UN's own Commission on Human Rights and its failure to defend, much less enforce, even the most basic human rights violations committed in China, Iraq, Africa and elsewhere. Critics have since argued that the UN was hardly the logical spear carrier to advance human security agendas on a global scale (see, for example, the scathing critique of the United Nations Human Rights Council by Buhrer [2003](#)).

Other international institutional approaches to human security have evolved independently of the UN. The 'Human Security Network' was initially formed in May 1998 when Canada and Norway signed the Lysøen Declaration establishing a bilateral framework for human security consultation and collaboration (Small [2001](#)). The network has grown to include thirteen members: Australia, Canada, Chile, Greece, Ireland, Jordan, Mali, the Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia, Switzerland and Thailand, with South Africa as an observer. It meets annually and has attempted to emulate the successes achieved with landmines and the International Criminal Court. The network has focused on the needs of war-affected children, enhancing the role of women on issues of peace and security, reducing the widespread availability of small arms, and strengthening capacity for peace support operations (see www.humansecuritynetwork.org). Canada invited Japan to participate in a Ministerial Meeting of the Human Security Network in September 1999 when the General Assembly of the UN was being convened. Japan declined this invitation. It objected to Canada's position of allowing humanitarian intervention via the use of military power – a clear example of Tokyo's difficulties in reconciling the dichotomy of viewing human security either as an instrument of 'soft power' or as a facilitator of American-led global security operations (Sato [2004](#): 11).

The watershed in the debate over human security at the United Nations was the inclusion of a paragraph on human security in the UN General Assembly document of the World Summit in September 2005. Ten years after the *Human Development Report 1994* helped introduce the concept, human security finally made it into the General Assembly document for the first time:

We stress the right of people to live in freedom and dignity, free from poverty and despair. We recognize that all individuals, in particular vulnerable people, are entitled to freedom from fear and freedom from want, with an equal opportunity to enjoy all their rights and fully develop their human potential. To this end, we commit ourselves to

discussing and defining the notion of human security in the General Assembly.

(United Nations General Assembly [2005](#): para. 143)

This paragraph, coupled with the notion of ‘responsibility to protect’ which was also included in the outcome document, has mainstreamed the concept at the United Nations. The ‘responsibility to protect’ is a new phrase, reflecting the question of humanitarian intervention to a sovereign state. The responsibility to protect argues that each individual state has the responsibility to protect its population from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, and that in accordance with Chapters VI and VII of the United Nations Charter, the international community, through the United Nations, also has the responsibility to use appropriate diplomatic, humanitarian and other peaceful means to help protect populations from such crimes. The same document also states that if national authorities fail to protect their population from such crimes, the international community has a responsibility to take necessary coercive measures, based upon a Security Council resolution and in accordance with Chapter VII of the UN Charter. Under this description, military intervention is restricted to that requiring a resolution by the UN Security Council. The notion of responsibility to protect has lessened concerns harboured by some countries about the need for intervention into domestic jurisdiction in the name of human security.

Following up, the Japanese government took the initiative and launched the Friends of Human Security Forum in order to discuss human security further and for UN member states to share their information regarding respective human security activity. The first meeting was held in October 2006, the second in April 2007, the third in November 2007 and the fourth in April 2008. This Forum is co-chaired by Japan and Mexico and is co-hosted by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. All P-5 states and sixty member states participate in the meeting. Furthermore, in May 2008, the first thematic debate of the General Assembly on human security was held in New York. Thus human security has gradually entered into the lexicon of the United Nations.

Asia-Pacific institutions were slower than their global counterparts to pick up and run with the human security gauntlet. Over the course of the decade during which the concept has been under constant development, Asian reaction to human security – for reasons already discussed above – has been

divided and evolving. Thailand and Japan have been enthusiastic promoters of human security. On the other end of the spectrum, China, in particular, has been concerned that human security would allow other nations or international organisations to interfere in domestic governance, in areas including human rights, the environment, poverty and social security. Indeed, Chinese officials and academics prefer to use the term 'non-traditional security' rather than human security. China's version of human security emphasises a regionally cooperative approach but one that does not need to be necessarily embedded in organisational constructs, and is transnational in nature. One respected Chinese analyst, Chu Shulong, has pointed out that 'the Chinese leadership will continue to defend fundamental national sovereignty rights, but...they will become more flexible and accepting toward relatively new concepts of security, including human security', adding that 'the Chinese recognize that in times of integration and globalization, nations and peoples around the world will gain more than they will lose from changing their traditional positions on national security' (Chu [2002](#): 25).

Notwithstanding such caveats, China has recently shown that it is more ready to jump on to the human security bandwagon. In November 2002, China signed the Joint Declaration of ASEAN and China on Cooperation in the Field of Non-Traditional Security Issues related to illegal drugs, people smuggling, trafficking in women and children, piracy, terrorism, arms smuggling, money laundering, international economic crime and cyber crime. In 2005, it signed a second agreement with Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam dealing with some of the same issues. Wang Yizhou, director of the Institute of World Economics and Politics, Chinese Academy of the Social Sciences, mentioned that 'it should be clarified that human security and social security are the foundations for national security...To seek national security at the expense of human security and social stability is to treat the symptom rather than the root of the problem' (Wang Yizou [2006](#): 66).

Even as China, Japan and other key Asian states are defining their national approaches to human security, the region as a whole is still struggling with the concept's implications for them in an institutional context. Illustrative is that ASEAN first formally employed the term 'human security' only in November 1999 when it was incorporated into the Chairman's press statement for the Third Informal Summit – two years after many of the components associated with the concept had been incorporated into the

aforementioned Vision 2020 statement. This statement indicated that ‘The HOS/G [Heads of State/Government] noted the convening of the Eminent Persons Group last June and welcomed its discussions on human security, regional identity and resilience’ (ASEAN [1999](#)). At the Fourth Informal Summit held in Singapore in November 2000, the report of the ASEAN Eminent Persons Group ([2000](#)) on Vision 2020 indicated that ‘We believe that the long-term aim has to be the realization of human security and development in the whole ASEAN region.’ The Summit Declaration on HIV/AIDS made at the Seventh ASEAN Summit in November 2001 in Bandar Seri Begawan referred to human security in the context of the threat of HIV/AIDS.⁴ The November 2004 ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Plan of Action, paragraph 6, declared at the Tenth Summit in Vientiane, made reference to human security.⁵

In the case of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the term ‘human security’ has not been used in the Chairman's statement of the annual ministerial meetings. It has, however, been included in two documents reporting on side talks and inter-sessional events. The first instance was in 2004 in relation to drug trafficking; the term ‘human security’ was included in the summary report of the meeting on confidence-building measures (ASEAN Regional Forum [2004](#): paragraph 15) which indicated that ‘the Meeting underscored the need to enhance international cooperation to solve the problem of illicit drugs which continues to pose a threat to human security’. The second instance was in the 2005 summary report of the workshop on changes in security perceptions (ASEAN Regional Forum [2005](#): paragraph 7.15) which referred to human security as an aspect of security cooperation among ARF members in addition to free, democratic societies and human rights.

To date, the term ‘human security’ has not been used in the Chairman's Statement or Joint Statements made by ASEAN+3 (ASEAN plus China, Japan and South Korea). Again, the term has been included in reports. The East Asia Vision Group (EAVG), a group of intellectuals convened by ASEAN+3 to recommend a future path towards an East Asian community, utilised the term in its 2001 report, which stated that one of the goals of the formation of an East Asian community was ‘to advance human security and well-being’ (East Asia Vision Group [2001](#): 7). The East Asia Study Group, an inter-governmental group that examined the Vision Group's report, also alluded to human security, although to a lesser degree than the EAVG,

indicating it as one of the issues to be considered in regional cooperation ('Final report of the East Asia Study Group' [2002](#)).

Perhaps influenced by the somewhat limited but still visible momentum for applying the concept in an Asia-Pacific region previously unaccustomed to doing so, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum leaders acknowledged human security as a factor in an increasingly complex international security environment. The Leaders' Declaration released in Bangkok during October 2003 included the term as the heading of Item 2, 'Enhancing human security'. It stated that 'We agreed to dedicate APEC not only to advancing the prosperity of our economies, but also to the complementary mission of ensuring the security of people' (2003 Leaders' Declaration). Since then, human security has been a topic of regular discussion in APEC. Similar passages were included in the 2004, 2005 and 2006 Leaders' Declarations (2004 Leaders' Declaration; 2005 Leaders' Declaration; 2006 Leaders' Declaration), which referred to threats such as terrorism, protection of air travellers, energy and pandemics, including SARS. Similar references to human security have been made in the Ministerial Meeting Joint Statement since 2003 (see www.apecsec.org.sg/content/apec/ministerial_statement.html).

Initially, APEC seemed to treat human security as a hybrid of the American interpretation that focuses on terrorism and military intervention against 'rogue elements' in the inter-state system rather than developing broader interpretations of the concept. The 2007 APEC summit in Sydney, however, could be regarded as a shift in this trend. President George W. Bush came to Sydney with the Iraq War uppermost in his mind. As one Australian journalist covering the summit complained, 'it shows a...poor commitment to APEC itself, that Bush skipped the second day of the leaders' summit. The biggest failure by Bush was that he got his message wrong. The president mainly wanted to talk about Iraq and war, whereas most of the Asian leaders were talking about economic opportunity, integration of their societies and economies, more trade, a vision of a more prosperous future together' (Sheridan [2007](#)). Yet the American President actively engaged with his APEC counterparts on a variety of human security-related issues, including human rights, climate change, energy security, pandemics and food supplies. A White House press release subsequently claimed that 'President Bush took the lead at APEC in championing human security issues' (White House [2007](#)). Perhaps most significantly, he combined geopolitics with concerns

about human rights by challenging China – the country many Asians regard as the inevitable successor to the US as the Asia-Pacific's most predominant power – to become more transparent about its own domestic human rights behaviour: 'We'll...work with China, but as we do so, we'll never shy away from expressing our deepest-held values that each person has human dignity, and that we believe strongly in liberty' (US Department of State [2007](#)). In opting to combine traditional security and human security paradigms in addressing a key Asia-Pacific institutional body, the President was endeavouring to strike an appropriate balance between customary regional sensitivities over national autonomy and sovereignty and promoting liberal democratic ideals in a region that hosts the world's fastest growing economies.

The way forward

Over time, Asia-Pacific countries have gradually become more positive about the politics of human security. This change in attitude is partly attributable to various seminal events: the 1997 financial crisis, the 1999 SARS epidemic, intermittent outbreaks of avian flu and the December 2004 tsunami. Such an evolution of Asian attitudes is reflected in the way the term 'human security' has been introduced into the official documents of both Asian regional conferences and the momentum of the concept as it has developed in various international institutions. One should note, however, that the concept is still regarded as occupying the margins of international security politics relative to such traditional security concerns as the global war on terror and nuclear non-proliferation. Bush's recent effort to integrate the two security approaches is meritorious but was hindered by a perception that American strategic difficulties in Iraq impeded the credibility of his effort.

Three critical preconditions must be present if an integration of traditional and human security approaches is to succeed in both the Asia-Pacific and global security environments. First, any such initiative should be devoid of excessive ideological baggage. References to 'Asian values', 'Asia-Pacific democracy partnership' and other symbolic but potentially divisive branding of approaches for realising freedom of fear, freedom of want and the freedom to live with dignity need to be minimised in favour of a more universal recognition that starvation, disease and other forms of vulnerability most often do not discriminate victims on the basis of what political ideals they

prefer.

Second, a successful fusion of traditional and human security will occur only if the more obvious elements of political hypocrisy are removed or minimised by the states and institutions most invested in advancing both types of security agendas. In a traditional context, 'national security imperatives' should not be allowed to overcome the rule of law in ways similar to what was arguably Washington's transgression along such lines when justifying its military intervention against Iraq in March 2003. In the human security arena, efforts to cover up warning signals of impending pandemics such as occurred in China prior to the SARS crisis or to explain away inaction in response to such genocides as those recently occurring in Kosovo, Darfur and Cambodia can only erode the international community's faith in the value and reality of people-oriented thinking about how to secure basic rights and needs.

A third precondition is that the notions of 'threat' and 'enforced cooperation' must be viewed as counter-productive in affecting both state-centric and human security. During the Cold War, the two major competing ideological blocs provided aid to developing states with political strings attached: ideological allegiance was 'bought' in return for the extension of humanitarian and development assistance. In the contemporary international setting, ties between industrialised or rapidly industrialising states and developing countries are often predicated on cultural, economic or strategic interests rather than on addressing the specific and fundamental needs of the latter's inhabitants. Energy security and cultural Islamic animosities against Western values and interests are cases in point.

Support for such initiatives as Malaysia's *Islam Hadhari*, or 'civilisational Islam' that emphasises development consistent with the tenets of Islam and focused on enhancing the quality of life exemplifies a more compassionate, non-zero-sum approach. It is essential to acknowledge the value of and implement universalist approaches to neutralising the forces of poverty, deprivation and extremism that otherwise inspire threats directed against both Asian and Western mainstream societies.

Will Asia-Pacific states work successfully with the United States and other Western countries to implement more successful human security initiatives over the next decade and beyond even as they sustain those security alliances and multilateral regional security institutions that have to date dominated order-building politics both regionally and globally? If properly cultivated

and applied, human security can effectively coexist, although remain subservient, with more traditional forms of security politics. The coexistence of the two security paradigms is thus the first of two outcomes that could flow from the three preconditions stipulated above. Military security is, in this outcome, recognised as necessary as the ultimate tool to protect nations and their citizens.

However, since the turn of the century, those events that have had the greatest impact on international security politics contain elements of both human security and traditional security that have fuelled an age of increasing global anxiety. The existing regimes and institutions for global governance do not possess sufficient capacity to respond to these anxieties. The root causes of these anxieties are in fact concerns more related to human security factors. Moreover, such insecurities are often transnational in nature and thus demand responses at multiple (local, national, regional and global) levels. The second possible outcome of a human/traditional security integration process is thus that of international opinion and institutions increasingly supporting Asia-Pacific policy initiatives directed towards primarily applying human security approaches.

Given their growing prosperity, their increasing self-confidence about their own national identities and their multicultural demographic compositions, Asian countries should be able to identify viable human security approaches to serve approximately half of the world's population that resides in their region. The region's potential as a focal point for unprecedented security cooperation in a wide array of policy sectors is unquestioned. Cooperative human security approaches must be placed on the agenda for the future in East Asia and for East Asian community-building. If the Asia-Pacific region can, with either of the outcomes described above, become a core area for facilitating and applying a combination of traditional and human security approaches, and gain the support of the international community in the pursuit of this approach, its legacy as a contributor to the advancement of the human condition and the eradication of human suffering will be a highly positive one.

¹ As David Bosold and Sascha Werthes ([2005](#): 91) have recently pointed out:

one might critically reply that military (humanitarian) intervention not only in failed states, but also in formerly

stable and totalitarian states (when they represent the greatest source of insecurity for their citizens) makes the prospects for implementing stability and promoting democracy rather bleak. Unfortunately, many of these newly-democratised countries have turned out to be highly unstable states, unable to provide for the basic security of their citizens. This situation is rather ironic because the stable state structures that were abused to create insecurity among citizens before the intervention might be useful in guaranteeing 'freedom from fear' in the post-intervention period.

Also see Ramesh Thakur's ([2006](#)) analysis on the humanitarian intervention problem.

² The most prominent advocates of the importance of the role of 'Asian values' in the economic, social and political development of East and Southeast Asian nations were Malaysian Prime Minister Mohammad Mahathir and Singaporean Senior Minister Lee Kuan Yew. Key 'public intellectuals' writing in support of this approach include Kishore Mahbubani ([1998](#)) and the late Noordin Sopiee ([1995](#)). For a thorough assessment of the 'Asian values' debate from a Western perspective, see Anthony Milner ([2000](#)). A sophisticated Asian perspective is Dewi Fortuna Anwar ([2003](#)).

³ General policy speech by Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi to the 156th Session of the Diet, 31 January 2003.

⁴ 'Deeply concerned that the HIV/AIDS pandemic is a threat to human security...'

⁵ 'Enhancing food security and safety as a fundamental requirement of human security.'

10 The economics–security nexus in the Asia-Pacific region

John Ravenhill

The rise of China and India poses new challenges for the management of economic and security relations in the Asia-Pacific region. Writers in the realist tradition (for instance, Gilpin [1981](#); Levy [1983](#); Mearsheimer [2001](#)) identify power transitions as the periods in which the international system historically has been most prone to major international conflict. Rising powers frequently are impatient with the role and status afforded them in the existing system. Existing great powers seldom succeed in fashioning an appropriate response that satisfies the new challengers. For realists, even in the absence of systemic wars, power transitions may still have a significant negative impact on global welfare because of the relationship they assume to exist between the distribution of power and economic openness – a relationship summarised as hegemonic stability. For realists, the Great Depression of the 1930s represents the classic example of economic costs arising from power transition and the absence in the international system of a single hegemonic power (Kindleberger [1973](#)).

Accordingly, the common assumption in much of the contemporary literature is that rapid economic growth and the emergence of new economic giants will inevitably lead to conflict – in a worst case scenario, to military confrontation. In an anarchical environment, states are unable to learn the lessons of history, and governments are doomed to repeat the mistakes of their predecessors (Schweller [1999](#)). In the East Asian context, David Kang ([2003a](#)) has put forward an alternative approach that contests the inevitability of such conflict, arguing instead that the rise of China may lead East Asia to ‘bandwagon’, to revert to a hierarchical system with China as the hegemon, a mode in which countries in East Asia historically coexisted peacefully.

I find neither the realist scenario nor that proposed by Kang very persuasive in that they are both based on approaches that fail to consider how the structure of the global economy has changed in the last half century – and how that of East Asia has been radically transformed over the last two decades. They miss some of the key elements of how states are currently being integrated into the global economy and the impact that these may have on their behaviour.¹ This chapter is therefore more sympathetic to Amitav Acharya's ([2003/04](#)) argument that ‘Asia's future will not resemble its past’

than to either the realist approach or that of Kang. This chapter elaborates Acharya's argument that rising economic interdependence and growing institutional linkages are key factors in managing security, but whereas Acharya gives priority to emerging regional norms, this chapter instead emphasises the economic dimension of regional integration.

The realist approach to systemic transformation focuses on questions relating to the distribution of power in the system, and to states' responses to rising powers. It assumes a timeless world in which structural variables are the key to outcomes; the character of interactions is not important. In contrast, I will argue that transformations in the character of economic interdependence have had a profound effect on interactions between states in the Asia-Pacific region. These changes significantly increase the cost of conflict.² The key agent in this transformation is the production network, a particular type of economic institution. Changes in economic interdependence have also had important consequences for domestic coalitions. And in the last decade the region has also experienced significant innovations in institutional configurations.

Economics and security I: liberal approaches

In recent years, the liberal argument that the growth of economic interdependence is associated with a reduction in inter-state conflict has received considerable critical scrutiny. A substantial number of large-*N* studies have explored the extent to which the record on inter-state conflict over the last two centuries sustains the argument. Through these studies, the classical liberal argument has been refined and extended.

The classical liberal argument was a straightforward proposition that the expansion of commercial ties would make the opportunity costs of war so high that no *rational* state would resort to the use of military force. Implicit in the liberal argument was a theory of domestic politics – that the expansion of commercial ties would strengthen the influence of traders and weaken that of protectionist interests who might be most disposed towards supporting a militarist foreign policy.³ The economic foundation of the liberal argument lies in Ricardian notions of comparative advantage: countries can increase their welfare through specialisation and trade. Conflict will lead to a disruption if not complete termination of trade. In turn, reduction in trade will inevitably produce welfare losses: overall output will drop and scarce

resources will be diverted to less productive activities (Polachek [1980](#)).

Researchers seeking to test these arguments face numerous empirical problems. Detailed trade data for many countries are available only for the period since the International Monetary Fund (IMF) began collecting statistics. Selecting data for the dependent variable is also problematic: should the investigation be confined only to militarised conflict or extended to other forms too? Should time lags be introduced because the expectation in the liberal argument is that current trade will improve future prospects for non-conflictual relations? Is the relevant level of analysis the systemic (how open are economies across the system?) or specific dyadic relationships because these better capture the most relevant trade partnerships? Moreover, the relationship between trade and conflict is one of mutual constitution (for instance, the absence of conflict fosters trade); consequently, the direction of causality is difficult to establish. Quantitative studies have to cope with spurious correlations determined by extraneous variables – as in relationships where the parties do not trade but no conflict occurs (for example, between small island states located in different geographical regions). And a whole host of other variables that the literature of economics and political science postulate will have an impact on trade and/or political relationships can intervene – including geographical contiguity, type of political system, membership in alliances, membership in regional organisations, colonial ties and so on.

Given the complexities of measurement and model estimation, the conclusions reached by the large-*N* studies have to be interpreted with caution. Nonetheless, a consistent pattern has emerged from the most sophisticated studies, demonstrating that higher levels of trade are associated with less inter-state conflict (Bennett and Stam [2000](#); Dorussen [2006](#); McDonald [2004](#); Oneal [2003](#); Oneal and Russett [1999](#), [2001](#); Polachek [1980](#); Polachek, Robst and Chang [1999](#)).⁴ The most straightforward element of the nineteenth-century classical liberal argument does appear to have been vindicated.⁵ Yet nineteenth-century conceptualisations of interdependence hardly seem appropriate for the contemporary globalised economy. The classical liberal argument needs to be extended.

Production networks and intra-industry trade

If there is a single defining characteristic of contemporary globalisation, which distinguishes it from earlier periods of economic interdependence, it is

the creation of a new international division of labour in which components are manufactured often in several countries, assembled elsewhere and then exported to global markets, a process that economists have labelled the 'fragmentation' of production (Arndt and Kierzkowski [2001](#)).⁶ Transnational production networks link manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers across territorial boundaries. These networks do not necessarily involve any investment – either direct or portfolio – from the country that provides the final market. Rather, they may rest primarily on 'arm's-length' transactions, but the simple relationship between seller and purchaser is supplemented by the provision, for instance, of technological and design assistance to the manufacturer. These manufacturers are ultimately dependent on the purchaser (wholesaler/retailer) for access to international markets.

The rise of transnational production networks is associated with the development of a new form of business model, in which companies principally derive their profits not from the manufacturing process but from control over distribution networks and/or key technologies (on the importance of control over core technologies, see Borras and Zysman [1997](#)). Nike was the pioneer of this new model of manufacturing outsourcing. In electrical goods, a long tradition exists of companies (both manufacturers such as GE, and retailers such as Sears) outsourcing manufacturing, for instance, of microwave ovens, and then 'badging' the product with their brand name. This outsourcing increasingly became the standard practice in the manufacture of personal computers. Most recently, we have seen the rise of 'contract manufacturers', responsible inter alia for much of the world's production of mobile phones, as leading consumer electronics firms have exited the manufacturing process (for a detailed discussion, see Ernst [2004](#)). In 2006, the world's largest contract manufacturer, Taiwan-based Hon Hai Precision, enjoyed revenues of over \$40 billion, more than two-thirds the value of those of Microsoft in the same period (EDN [2007](#)).

The growth of transnational production networks has been closely associated with the other principal defining characteristic of contemporary globalisation: the growth of intra-industry trade. Whereas patterns of international trade remained largely unchanged for centuries up until 1945, organised around the exchange of manufactures for raw materials, trade in the post-Second World War era has been increasingly dominated by the exchange of manufactures in the same product sectors, sometimes differentiated primarily by brand name. Initially, these intra-industry

exchanges were conducted primarily by industrialised economies. With the spread of transnational production networks in the last quarter of the century, some of the less developed economies have increasingly become players in this exchange. With almost all major economies (the notable exception is Japan) more open than at any time in their history, domestic welfare increasingly depends on intra-industry trade.⁷

These qualitative changes in the nature of trade are important because they are relevant to a key criticism of the classical liberal argument, namely that trade may not create genuine interdependence but uneven relationships of asymmetrical vulnerabilities that not only can be manipulated by the more powerful party but also may themselves generate conflict (Hirschman 1945). The composition of trade can affect the link between trade and conflict in several ways. First, if the trade is primarily raw materials-based, then the opportunity costs of conflict may be high for the importing state because of the absence of alternative sources of supply – particularly significant for ‘strategic’ commodities such as oil. For this model, the pacifying effect of trade will depend on the capacity of states to find alternative sources of supply and/or markets. The effect will be most pronounced where both supplier and importer have potentially high opportunity costs, that is, they do not have readily available alternative markets or sources of supply.⁸

Second, the opportunity costs of conflict will also be affected by the specificity of the assets employed in traded goods. Where the assets employed are specific (immobile), as is typically the case in manufacturing (except in low-technology, labour-intensive operations such as low-end clothing and footwear), then economies will face substantial adjustment costs if trade is disrupted. Because opportunity costs arising from asset specificity apply equally to importers and exporters then, as Han Dorussen (2006: 92) argues, ‘trade in highly asset-specific products should unambiguously decrease the probability of conflict’.

Third, the growth of intra-industry trade has had profound effects on the domestic political economy equation, that is, the balance between pro-liberalisation and pro-protection forces. With the expansion of intra-industry trade, groups that have an interest in accessing foreign markets will grow in political influence: in turn they will have a desire to ensure that domestic markets are kept open so that they are able to source imports for their integrated production chains (Helleiner 1981 provides the first significant statement of this argument, subsequently explored in detail by Milner 1988).

This domestic political impact stands in marked contrast to that generated by trade in raw materials, in which the exploitation of mineral resources is often a foreign-dominated enclave, where operators have an interest in maintaining an over-valued exchange rate to facilitate the import of capital equipment.

Interdependence beyond trade

The vast majority of large-*N* studies that have investigated the liberal hypothesis on the relationship between interdependence and conflict have followed the arguments of the nineteenth-century theorists by focusing exclusively on trade (not surprisingly, perhaps, because the problems of lack of detailed data notwithstanding, trade data are more readily available and reliable than those for other interactions). Yet, in the period after 1945, and especially since the breakdown of the Bretton Woods system of fixed exchange rates in 1971, international capital flows have taken on a new significance – to the extent that some commentators see them as having a more constraining impact than trade flows on national economic decision-making.

Daily turnover in foreign exchange markets is in excess of US\$3.5 trillion; the weekly turnover is substantially more than the annual value of global trade, which amounted to US\$14 trillion in 2007. Although global foreign direct investment (FDI) flows fell after the events of 11 September 2001, by 2006 they had nearly recovered to their previous peak of US\$1.4 trillion, reached in 2000. The recent growth in FDI flows has been driven primarily by merger and acquisition activities (with 172 deals worth over US\$1 billion in 2006; UNCTAD [2007](#): xv), again reinforcing the transnational linkages among economies (and among economic elites within these economies). As Erik Gartzke, Quan Li and Charles Boehmer ([2001](#): 392) argue, ‘capital markets link aspects of domestic economies that otherwise have little domestic exposure’, and these markets, given the preoccupation of investors with risk and their capacity to switch their funds from one location/instrument very quickly, respond more quickly to political signals than does trade in goods and services. The nature of contemporary interdependence is nowhere better illustrated than in exchange rate markets. ‘Dirty’ floats may enable governments to sustain an advantage for their exporters. On the other hand, for a country that chooses to peg its exchange rate to a foreign currency (as has been the de facto situation for many East Asian countries even in the decade after the financial crises – see Cohen

[2008](#)), domestic economic conditions will be significantly affected by the economic management of the foreign economy. Behaving irresponsibly as far as foreign investors or exchange rate markets are concerned may impose severe costs on the domestic economy.

New institutional configurations

The presence of multilateral institutions is the defining characteristic of postwar global economic regimes. These institutions – with the important roles they play in establishing rules of conduct, in building confidence among members, in promoting liberalisation and hence greater interdependence, in creating dispute resolution mechanisms and in socialising individuals – have no precedent in international economic relations, and add an important new dimension to liberal arguments about the positive impact of economic interdependence on inter-state relations.

In addition to the global institutions, of which the World Trade Organization (WTO) is the most relevant for the arguments in this chapter, a proliferation of regional trade institutions has also occurred in the last decade. These institutions too have the potential to inhibit conflict between members through increasing trade (and investment) flows, establishing the principle of reciprocity and creating forums for bargaining and negotiation (including dispute settlement mechanisms) (Mansfield [2003](#)).

Economics and security II: realist propositions

In contrast to the straightforward linkage between economics and security posited in nineteenth-century liberalism, more effort is required to uncover the main tenets of the relationship in the second major strand of theorising – realist approaches. In much realist writing, economics figures simply as a component of national power (Knorr [1973](#), [1975](#); Knorr and Trager [1977](#)). Jonathan Kirshner ([1999](#)), however, provides a more sophisticated treatment of this topic. He suggests that four core propositions lie at the heart of realism's treatment of international economic relations: (1) the state will intervene in commercial relations when its interests diverge from those of domestic actors; (2) security concerns will shape the pattern of international economic relations; (3) international economic cooperation consequently will be difficult to establish and maintain; and (4) economic change will tend to lead to political conflict.

How do changes in economic relations in the Asia-Pacific region relate to

refinements of the liberal argument on the relationship between economic interdependence and conflict? To what extent does the recent experience in the region lend support to the realist as opposed to the liberal approach? These are the principal questions that the remainder of this chapter will explore. The primary focus will be on China because of its sustained, unprecedented rate of economic growth, and the challenge that many commentators believe this rising power is posing to the stability of the system. China's growth has catapulted the economy to the number two ranking in national gross domestic product (GDP) if measured in purchasing parity terms, to the position of the world's second largest exporter (according to the WTO, Chinese exports overtook those of the United States in the second half of 2006), and it has become the world's second largest importer of oil, and second largest market for automobiles.

Economics and security in the Asia-Pacific region

In this chapter, I do not undertake a large-*N* study of the 'liberal peace' argument in the Asia-Pacific region. There are several reasons for this. First, the developments that I am interested in are of very recent origin, making a longitudinal study impossible. Second, measurement of the principal development that I discuss, the proliferation of production networks, is particularly difficult – comparable cross-national data on, for instance, the share of final exports that imported components constitute are simply not available. We can, however, have confidence that the liberal argument about the relationship between interdependence and levels of conflict argument is applicable to the Asian region because of the work of Benjamin Goldsmith ([2007](#)). He found that of the various components of the 'liberal peace' argument – joint democracy, joint membership in intergovernmental organisations and increased economic interdependence – in relations among Asian states only the latter, the essence of the commercial liberal argument, measured in terms of trade flows between dyads, showed a statistically significant relationship with levels of inter-state conflict. In relations between Asian states and partners in other parts of the world, although a positive relationship existed between trade flows and absence of conflict in the years since 1975, it was not statistically significant. I will suggest why the changing character of economic interdependence both within East Asia and between Asia and the rest of the world in the last two decades gives grounds

for optimism that a refined version of the liberal hypothesis will find support in future work.

The evolution of production networks and China's integration into the global economy

Nowhere in the global economy has the development of transnational production networks been more significant than in the Asia-Pacific region. First, Korea and Taiwan became significant suppliers to US electronics sectors. Then, following the 1985 Plaza Accord among G7 members, substantial investments in leading Southeast Asian economies incorporated them into US and Northeast Asian-led networks. Most recently, a reorientation of networks has occurred with first the incorporation of China and increasingly their extension to South Asia as the Indian economy opens up.

China has rapidly become the world's foremost assembly plant. The trade triangles that developed in the late 1980s following the Plaza Accord currency realignments, in which components were shipped from Northeast Asia for assembly in Southeast Asia for export to world markets, have been largely superseded by new trade triangles in which components from Northeast and Southeast Asian economies alike are being shipped to China primarily for assembly and export. One consequence has been a growth in the overall significance of intra-regional trade in East Asia. Although this still lags behind that of Europe, it now constitutes more than half of the total trade of countries in the region (Lincoln [2004](#); Ravenhill [2008](#)). China has grown rapidly in importance as an export market for other East Asian states – not least Korea, for which it is now the single largest export market. The growth of intra-regional trade is dominated by the exchange of parts and components. Compared with other parts of the world, East Asian economies are relatively specialised in the manufacture of parts and components, and this specialisation has increased since the early 1990s. Asia's share in world exports of parts and components (38 per cent in 2003) is significantly higher than its share in overall world exports (29 per cent) (Gaulier, Lemoine and Ünäl-Kesenci [2006](#): 11).

The hype that has accompanied the increase in intra-regional trade in Asia often leads commentators to ignore two economically – and politically – significant trends that have accompanied it. First, despite the growth in intra-

regional trade, East Asia as a whole still depends overwhelmingly on extra-regional markets for the sale of finished manufactures: whereas in 2004, 40 per cent of all exports from developing Asia went to other parts of the region, the figure for final goods was less than one-third (Athukorala [2006](#): 12). The growth of intra-regional trade in components ultimately has been dependent on the sale of final products in extra-regional markets. Second, while China has been growing in importance for other East Asian economies, they in turn have been declining in significance as an export market for China itself. The share of other Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)+3+1 economies in China's exports *declined* from 63 per cent in 1990 to 39 per cent in 2005.⁹ In the same period, the share of the US in China's exports *grew* from 8.6 per cent to 21.5 per cent, while that of the European Union (EU) rose from 10.2 per cent to 18.9 per cent (Ravenhill [2008](#): Table 7.6). China's weight in the total East Asian economy heavily influences aggregate trade data: while the share of intra-regional trade in East Asia's total exports has increased over the last decade, if one confines the focus to final goods then, because of China's dependence on American and European markets for sales of these products, the share of East Asian exports going to *extra*-regional markets has actually increased over the last decade (Athukorala [2007](#)).

These recent developments in the trade of East Asian economies have several important implications for political relations with partners outside the region, and within the region itself. The first is that, contrary to some of the hyperbole that surrounded the Asian reaction to the financial crises of 1997–8, there is no evidence that a closed economic bloc is emerging in East Asia, a development that had it been realised would inevitably increase the potential for conflict over trade relations. Second, contrary to some of the expectations current at the time of China's accession to the WTO in 2001, China's growth has not occurred at the expense of other economies in the region. While some dramatic changes in trade have occurred in the last decade, with exports of finished goods from China displacing those from both Northeast and Southeast Asia in third-country markets, this loss of markets for finished goods has been more than balanced for China's Asian neighbours by increased sales of components to the rapidly growing Chinese market itself (Ravenhill [2006a](#), [2007](#)). In a more disaggregated study, Premachandra Athukorala ([2003](#)) finds that the share of parts and components in Malaysia's exports of manufactures to China rose from 6.4 per cent in 1992 to 16.1 per cent in 1996 to 50.6 per cent in 2000; for Singapore the respective

figures were 23.1 per cent, 41.9 per cent and 50.3 per cent; for Thailand 6.8 per cent, 29.2 per cent and 54.0 per cent. The increase in sales of components to China is the single most important factor in other East Asian economies increasing their shares in global markets for parts and components in machinery and transport equipment. Over the period 1992–3 to 2004–5, Korea's share of global markets increased from 2.2 per cent to 4.6 per cent; that of Taiwan from 3.2 per cent to 5.7 per cent; while that of ASEAN rose most sharply from 6 per cent to 10.7 per cent (Athukorala [2007](#): Table 4).

China's role as an assembly plant has made its economic growth highly dependent on its role in transnational production networks. Here it is first important to note that China is a far more open economy than Japan has ever been: indeed, for an economy of its size, the role of foreign trade in GDP is very high indeed. Foreign trade in 2004 accounted for more than 65 per cent of the total value of China's GDP; the figures for Japan and the United States were respectively 22 per cent and 24 per cent. The share of exports in GDP has increased from under 5 per cent in 1978 to more than 40 per cent today, an unprecedented figure for a continental economy of China's size. Second, China's manufacturing exports depend overwhelmingly on what it terms foreign-invested firms, that is either foreign-owned subsidiaries or joint ventures with such subsidiaries. These account for more than half of China's total trade, and for more than 80 per cent of its processing trade (Gaulier, Lemoine and Ünal-Kesenci [2006](#): 9). And third, these exports in turn rest heavily on imported components. Estimates suggest that exports of processed components contribute between 60 per cent and 80 per cent of the value of all Chinese exports. In 2002, fully 60 per cent of China's imports from Japan were for processing (Gaulier, Lemoine and Ünal-Kesenci [2006](#): 16).

The growing sophistication of China's manufactured exports

A marked transformation has occurred in China's export composition since the mid-1990s. In the period from 1992–3 to 2004–5, the share of machinery and transport equipment in China's exports increased from 17 to 44 per cent; that of the more traditional labour-intensive exports, captured by the miscellaneous manufacturing category, fell from one-half to less than one-third of all exports (Athukorala [2007](#)). By 2005, it was estimated that fully one-quarter of China's total exports were composed of high-technology products (Sergey and Breidne [2007](#): 141). Exports of mechanical and electrical products during the first half of 2006 reached US\$244 billion, more

than two and a half times the value (US\$91.5 billion) of labour-intensive exports. Exports of 'high-tech' products were valued at US\$123.5 billion (McCormack [2006](#)). China has become the world's largest exporter of personal computers and now also accounts for more than one-quarter of the world's exports of mobile phones and DVD/CD players.

China's export composition is far more advanced than would be expected for a country of its per capita income (Rodrik [2006](#)). The increasing sophistication of China's exports again has important implications for the liberal argument about the relationship between interdependence and conflict. First, as noted in the discussion of recent large-*N* studies above, an increase in asset specificity will raise the opportunity costs of disrupting a trade relationship – and the more sophisticated the manufactured product, typically the more specific are the assets devoted to its production. China's move towards more sophisticated manufactured exports makes for an economic relationship that is even more costly to break. Second, exports of high-technology goods depend substantially on components imported from around the region. Moreover, China depends heavily on foreign-invested enterprises for these 'high technology' exports. In 2003, more than 85 per cent of high-tech exports were produced by foreign-invested companies, many of them entirely foreign-owned (Senger and Breidne [2007](#): 141). The integration of China into the global economy through the extension of production networks is creating a multifaceted interdependence whose links are increasingly costly to fracture.

Domestic coalitions

China's domestic decision-making process remains opaque – it is not easy to identify who the key actors are in much decision-making or the relative influence of different interests. It is difficult to believe, nonetheless, that China's rapid integration into the global economy has not increased the political influence of those involved in the export sector of the economy, which in turn is a group that often simultaneously has a strong interest in maintaining unimpeded access to vital imports of technology and components.

The evidence from elsewhere in Asia points to the importance of integration into the global economy in changing the balance of domestic coalitions. Etel Solingen ([1999](#), [2003](#)) presents the most theoretically

sophisticated account of how reliance on the global economy for markets, capital and technology can lead to the emergence of internationalising coalitions that have an interest in the pursuit of pacific foreign policies. While emphasising that her approach is at odds with a liberal model that stipulates a simplistic linear relationship between trade expansion and reduction in conflict, not least because of the possibility of domestic backlash against the costs that globalisation imposes on some actors, Solingen demonstrates that greater enmeshment with the global economy does strengthen domestic coalitions that have an interest in peaceful external relations (for another study that reaches similar conclusions on the ascendancy of export-oriented coalitions in ASEAN, see Stubbs [2000](#)).

The proliferation of preferential trade agreements

For many years, commentators characterised the Asia-Pacific region as ‘under-institutionalised’. The proliferation of inter-governmental agreements, particularly in the trade sphere, in recent years suggests that they may have to amend their judgements. By mid-2007, more than eighty preferential trade agreements involving East Asian countries were being implemented, negotiated or the subject of official study groups.

While I remain sceptical of the impact that these agreements will have on overall trade (not least because of the generally low levels of tariffs and the resistance of domestic forces to liberalisation of ‘sensitive’ sectors), and on investment flows (Ravenhill [2006b](#)), they do have the advantage of institutionalising cooperation among participants. They are part of confidence-building measures that should help improve inter-state relations. They often include mechanisms for dispute resolution. They have moved many countries in the region away from the unilateral approach to trade liberalisation that they practised in the second half of the 1980s and in the 1990s: while economists would decry such a move as tantamount to shooting oneself in the foot, the advantage of a reciprocity-based approach is that it enhances the domestic coalitions that support liberalisation.

Another feature of the agreements is noteworthy in the context of the trade/conflict debate: two-thirds of the preferential trade agreements that East Asian economies have negotiated to date are with countries from outside East Asia. Again, the geographical distribution of the agreements points to the lack of any movement towards a closed East Asian trading bloc, which might

exacerbate international tensions.

Foreign direct investment

Industrialisation in Northeast Asia (with the partial exception of Taiwan) was characterised by very low levels of foreign direct investment (for the Korean case, see Mardon [1990](#)). The situation has changed dramatically in recent years, primarily because of China's emergence as one of the top three recipients of FDI. Japan and Korea are also much more welcoming of FDI than in the past – but neither country has attracted flows anywhere close to the norm for economies of their size (and in the most recent year for which data are available, Japan actually incurred a net loss of inward investment). In contrast, FDI has played a significant role in China, not least because of the technology and international linkages that it brings. Although the ‘foreign’ component in inward investment in China is greatly over-stated by FDI data because of the phenomenon of ‘round-tripping’ investment (funds that originate in China but are sent offshore so that they benefit from the tax and other advantages conferred on ‘foreign’ investment), China's economic development is far more dependent on FDI than was that of Japan or Korea – again pointing to the establishment of linkages that would be costly to break.

Monetary interdependence

Monetary interdependence is by no means guaranteed to be conflict-free. Nowhere is this better illustrated than in current tensions between Washington and Beijing on the yuan's exchange rate. Yet, while such interdependence creates frictions, it has also led to mutual dependencies that would be costly for either side to break.

The US continues to enjoy extraordinary privileges in the global financial regime. Because the United States is uniquely capable of creating paper assets that are acceptable worldwide, it has no need to maintain large reserves of foreign exchange. On the other hand, the holdings of US T-bills by East Asian governments, and their willingness to continue to invest in them, has afforded these governments some leverage over the US. In August 2007, East Asian countries collectively held more than US\$1.1 trillion of US Treasury securities, more than half the total in foreign hands.^{[10](#)} The financial press over the last few years has frequently discussed the possibility that East Asian governments may reallocate their reserve assets away from those

denominated in dollars to, for example, the euro (or more recently, divert them to sovereign wealth funds), and how such a move could substantially weaken the dollar. Occasional statements by East Asian financial officials that they were contemplating such action have in themselves been sufficient to trigger a short-term drop in the dollar's value.

Any such move out of dollars, however, if it prompted a significant drop in the dollar's value, would also impose significant damage on the East Asian economies themselves. This would occur, for instance, through reducing the value of their remaining dollar holdings, through the likely immediate negative impact on the US economy, which even though it has declined in aggregate importance still remains for many East Asian countries their single most important export market, and through making their own exports less competitive in the US market. The situation is very different to that in the 1960s when, for instance, the French central bank could merrily convert dollars into gold with reasonable certainty, under the one-way bet of the inflexible exchange rates of the pre-1971 financial regime, that at worst it would incur almost no damage in the process. Today, complex interdependence is the character of the global financial regime, with relationships far more costly for all parties to break.

The realist alternative: states in command?

As noted above, Kirshner ([1999](#)) suggests that realist approaches to economics can be boiled down to four core propositions. One of these remains untested in the contemporary system: whether the rise of China will lead to political conflict. But the recent experience in East Asia casts doubt on at least two other propositions: that the state will intervene in commercial relations when its interests diverge from those of domestic actors; and that security concerns will shape the pattern of international economic relations.

Most commentators accept that in the Cold War era economic collaboration was, in Vinod Aggarwal's terminology, 'nested' within an overarching security framework (Aggarwal [1985](#)).¹¹ Although Europe is often used as the primary site for exploring this relationship, the argument

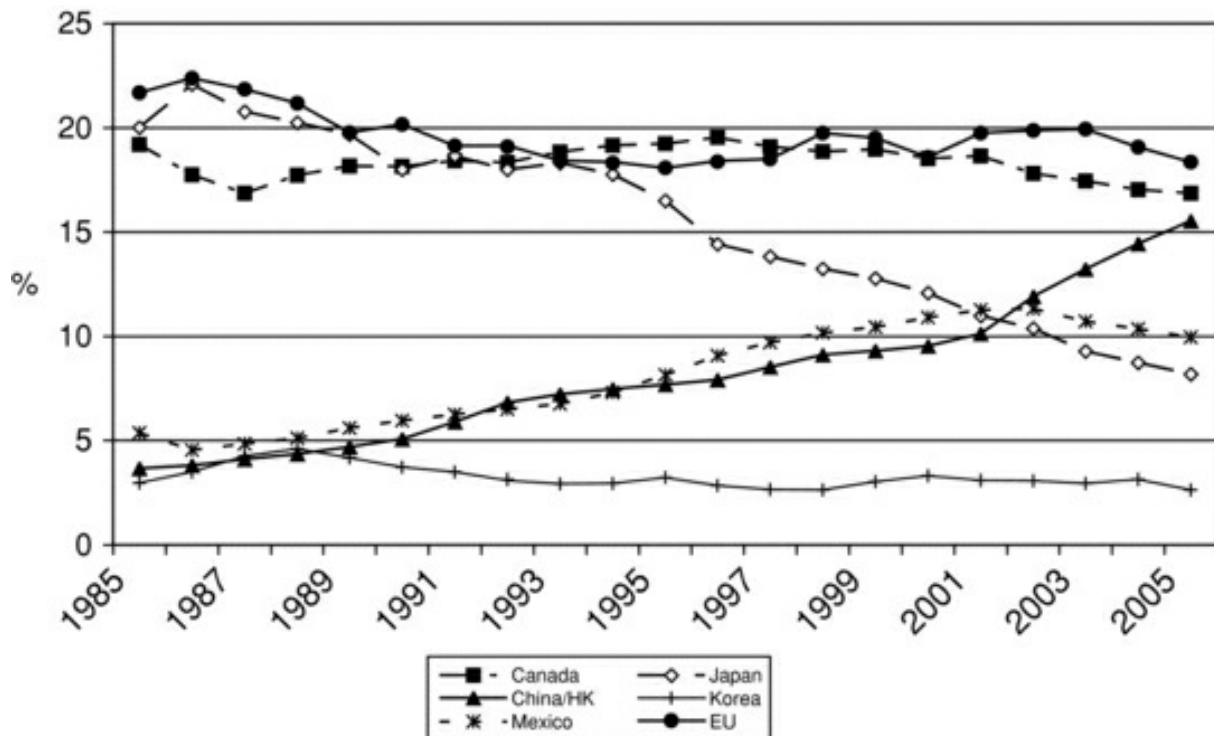


Figure 10.1 Shares in US global imports (%)

Source: IMF [2007](#).

appeared equally valid in Asia – with a marked contrast, for instance, between the extent of trade and investment relations that the United States and its European allies had with Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand on the one hand, in contrast with those with North Korea, Vietnam or China (pre-1990) on the other.

The incorporation of China into global production networks appears to cast doubt on this ‘timeless’ realist argument. [Figure 10.1](#) presents data on the share of specific countries in US merchandise imports since 1985. A cursory glance suggests that the relationship between alliances and international trade has been significantly undermined by China's rise. Most notably, China's growing share of the US market appears to have come primarily at the expense of America's Northeast Asian allies, Japan and Korea – China's share more than tripling in the last two decades to over 15 per cent of total US imports during a period when Japan's share fell by more than half. The explanation lies in the reorientation of production networks discussed above.

Meanwhile, the argument that the state will intervene to override commercial interests has become less plausible in an era when domestic

groups have such a high stake in increasingly interdependent foreign economic relations. Japan and to a lesser extent Korea and Taiwan were easy targets for punitive US trade sanctions in the quarter of a century from the end of Bretton Woods because of the structure of the trade between the parties. The East Asian states' mercantilist trade policies, the control of a large part of their trade by domestic trading companies, coupled with governmental restrictions on inward FDI, meant that relatively few domestic economic interests in the US besides the (notoriously difficult to organise) consumer lobby and some primary product exporters came to the defence of the East Asian states when they became targets of US unilateralism. Today, the structure of trans-Pacific trade has changed dramatically.

Although the US trade deficit is currently reaching new record levels, again a function of domestic macroeconomic imbalances, the economic relationship with China, the country responsible for the largest single source of the deficit, is significantly different in character to those with Japan, Korea and Taiwan of twenty years ago. China is a much more open economy than Japan has ever been, its current ratio of trade to GDP being 56 per cent (the figure for Japan is 21 per cent). It is also much more open to foreign direct investment – in 2002, its ratio of FDI to GDP was 35 per cent (up from less than 1 per cent in 1986), in contrast to that of Japan which, even after two decades of the government's encouragement of inward FDI, was only 2 per cent. Despite China's extraordinary growth over the last twenty-five years, its share in world exports is only 6 per cent compared with the Japanese share of 10 per cent at the height of its export boom in 1986, and China's overall trade surplus with the world is much smaller than that of Japan in the 1980s (data from Hufbauer and Wong [2004](#): 3).

Again in contrast to the 1980s experience with other Northeast Asian economies, the vast majority of US exports to China are sophisticated manufactures: the largest single category is aircraft, followed by telecommunications and electronics equipment and parts. And, contrary to the previous experience with Japan and Korea in particular, US firms handle much of the distribution of China's burgeoning exports: Wal-Mart alone is estimated to account for one-eighth of China's exports to the United States (Goodman and Pan [2004](#)). China's growth has also dramatically changed trade patterns in East Asia, with cross-border trade in components of increasing significance (with opportunities, for instance, for US subsidiaries in Southeast Asia to export components to China for assembly).

The consequence of the structure of this relationship is that far more domestic economic interests in the US are prepared to go in to bat in defence of China than was true for Japan and the Northeast Asian newly industrialised countries in the 1980s. Despite rumblings in the US Congress about China's trade surplus and the under-valued renminbi, it is likely to be far more difficult for Washington to undertake hostile unilateral policies against China than was the case with the other Northeast Asian economies fifteen years ago.

Moreover, the context in which trade is conducted has changed significantly. To be sure, East Asian states in the past did benefit from their ability to play the security card in resisting US unilateralism. But their capacity to do so was on the wane long before the Cold War was officially declared over. Far more significant for contemporary relations has been the legalisation of trade relations with the advent of the WTO. As East Asian states have become increasingly adept at using the WTO's Dispute Settlement Mechanisms, so Washington has found that its capacity to resort to unilateral policies has been significantly constrained. Japan has been particularly impressive in exploiting the new rules of the game: its threat to take the dispute over auto parts to the WTO effectively headed off US recourse to unilateralism. Meanwhile, the verdict of the WTO Dispute Panel in the Fuji film case spelled the end of US efforts to use the world body to promote its agenda for removing structural impediments to its exports (see Pekkanen [2001](#), [2004](#)). And where Japan has led, one can expect China to follow, even though it will be constrained for some years by the conditions attached to its accession to the WTO (in March 2002, China joined the complaint initially lodged by the EU against the Bush administration's protection of the US steel industry).

Conclusion

The international fragmentation of manufacturing (and increasingly services) output, and the growth of intra-industry trade, have led to qualitative changes in the nature of interdependence. Whereas the principal security concern in the economic realm for most states before 1945 was access to raw materials, this has today been largely supplanted by issues relating to access to markets, finance and technology. In today's globalised marketplace, developing economies are heavily dependent on production networks for access to the

technology needed to produce the sophisticated consumer goods demanded not just in industrialised economies but by the middle class throughout the world. And access to brand names and marketing channels are critical for penetrating international markets.

Several key consequences follow. Although states whose economic growth depends heavily on raw material importers will inevitably continue to have concerns about future security of supply (witness the prominent role of raw materials exporters in the list of countries China has targeted for preferential trade agreements), this will be only one factor in the mix of foreign economic policy goals being pursued by states. Any temptation to use military force to secure access to raw materials will be counter-balanced by the potential loss of access to markets, finance, components and technology that would occur should an expansionary military policy be pursued. Access to all of these is provided primarily through integration into production networks, essentially a function of private sector actions (although the state can of course take effective supportive action to facilitate such integration). Second, globalisation has created a more genuine interdependence in the sense of relationships that are mutually costly to sever. Inevitably, some degree of asymmetry will be present. But the fragmentation of production brings substantial benefits to consumers in industrialised economies (and through lowering prices below levels that would otherwise prevail, stimulates economic growth). It would not be easy for the US economy to forgo the inexpensive Chinese-produced goods that Wal-Mart markets.

Equally important is that the fragmentation of production provides exporting countries with important internal allies in the political systems of industrialised countries – companies that source from them and are dependent on their relatively inexpensive labour, whether skilled or unskilled – for the competitiveness of their goods. And of course the growth in international trade has created more domestic allies in the form of companies that are dependent on foreign markets for a large part of their sales. Any temptation governments have to attempt to deny access to their domestic markets to manufactured exports from international competitors is likely to face much more significant domestic opposition than was the case before 1945. Critically important in this context is the far greater openness of the Chinese economy than that of Japan, and the different composition of trade between the US and China compared with that between the US and Japan.

Dale Copeland has argued that the missing link in liberal interpretations of

the relationship between commerce and conflict is expectations – specifically, whether states perceive that their access to trade and thus to raw materials and markets will be threatened in the future (Copeland [1996](#), [2003](#)). High levels of economic interdependence, he suggests, will facilitate peaceful interactions if states are confident that trading relations will continue. If, however, states believe that the probability of continued trade is low, then they will have a stronger temptation to act aggressively (the anticipated costs of doing so being reduced because the benefits from future trade are significantly discounted). To the extent that production networks have substantially changed the quality of interdependence between countries and made existing links more costly to break, they will also change states' expectations as to whether trade will continue in the future.

Expectations have also been changed by two further developments highlighted in this chapter. One is the change in dominant domestic coalitions in many East Asian countries as integration has strengthened internationalist forces. The second is the markedly different institutional context that has emerged, with global economic institutions increasingly supplemented by minilateral arrangements that facilitate confidence-building among states. The relationship between the growth of interdependence and a reduction in militarised conflict between states is at best a probabilistic one: no proponent of the liberal approach would be sufficiently naïve to assert that growing interdependence will assure peace. And, the changes that have occurred in East Asia as a consequence of China's emergence as the world's assembly plant are relatively recent, providing only a limited time period on which to base observations. Nonetheless, the contemporary trends in the Asia-Pacific region, and in particular the growing incorporation of China into the global economy, provide substantial grounds for optimism.

¹ The focus in this chapter is primarily on China. Similar arguments can be made for India, although until recently the relatively closed character of the Indian economy has limited its integration into transnational production networks – but in some industries, such as automobiles, this is changing rapidly. The focus is on inter-state security rather than the impact of interdependence on domestic security.

² The argument mirrors John Ruggie's ([1983](#)) criticisms of Kenneth Waltz's systemic theorising for its lack of concern with 'dynamic density'.

³ Both because these groups have a vested interest in seeing trade disrupted and because they may gain if the state is successful in enlarging their ‘domestic’ market through policies of imperial conquest.

⁴ For studies using alternative methodologies that cast doubt on there being a positive relationship between interdependence and peace see Barbieri ([1996](#), [2003](#)); Green, Kim and Yoon ([2001](#)).

⁵ In this chapter I do not address another criticism of the liberal argument, that is, it misrepresents the relationship between interdependence and peace. Writers who follow Blainey ([1973](#)) in adopting a ‘rationalist’ approach in arguing that war results when the parties misperceive one another's relative strength and commitment suggest that the classical liberal argument mis-specifies the relationship between interdependence and conflict. For these writers, the importance of growing interdependence is that it facilitates the transmission of ‘costly signals’ that reveal the commitment of parties without their having to resort to military conflict. Nonetheless, even though the mechanism through which interdependence affects the incidence of conflict is different, the prediction is still the same as in the classical liberal argument: the growth of interdependence will be associated with less inter-state conflict. For the rationalist explanation see Fearon ([1995](#)); for specific application to the interdependence argument see Gartzke ([2003](#)); Gartzke, Li and Boehmer ([2001](#)); Morrow ([1999](#)).

⁶ Economists, however, have been slow in recognising this phenomenon, which of course runs contrary to conventional theories of international trade. Sociologists, political scientists and analysts of international business have produced a rich literature on the emergence of these networks – see, for instance, Bernard and Ravenhill ([1995](#)); Borrus, Ernst and Haggard ([2000](#)); Dicken ([2003](#)); Gereffi and Korzeniewicz ([1994](#)); Hamilton ([2006](#)).

⁷ Openness is conventionally defined in economics as the share of foreign trade in gross domestic product.

⁸ An alternative argument would be that economies for which the potential costs of trade disruption are extremely high because, say, they will lose access to a ‘strategic’ import, will be tempted to take pre-emptive military action to secure supplies. Such arguments would be

relevant to nineteenth-century imperialism and to the 1930s experience in the Asia-Pacific region. If, however, one accepts a twentieth-century variant of the liberal argument (Rosecrance [1986](#)), that territorial expansionism is not a cost-effective means of securing access to supplies of crucial raw materials, then it is less persuasive for the contemporary globalised economy.

⁹ ASEAN plus China, Japan and South Korea, plus Hong Kong (data from IMF [2007](#)).

¹⁰ The major holders were Japan (US\$billions 585.6), China (400.2 – a figure that had more than doubled in two years), Hong Kong (56.2), Taiwan (52.2), Korea (48.9) and Singapore (34.9) (US Treasury [2007](#)).

¹¹ For detailed surveys of the relationship between alliances and economic relations, see Gowa ([1994](#)); Mansfield ([1994](#)); Mansfield and Bronson ([1997](#)).

Part III

11 Problematising ‘linkages’ between Southeast Asian and international terrorism

Greg Fealy and Carlyle A. Thayer

On 20 September 2001, in response to the terrorist attacks on the United States nine days earlier, President George W. Bush addressed a joint session of the US Congress to explain who had perpetrated the attacks and how his administration would respond. President Bush made clear that ‘(o)ur war on terror begins with al-Qaeda, but it does not end there. It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated’ (Bush [2001](#)). Bush described al-Qaeda as ‘a collection of loosely affiliated terrorist organizations’, led by Osama bin Laden, with a network extending to sixty countries. In sum, Bush committed the US to an open-ended global war on terrorism:

Americans should not expect one battle, but a lengthy campaign, unlike any other we have ever seen. It may include dramatic strikes, visible on TV, and covert operations, secret even in success. We will starve terrorists of funding, turn them one against another, drive them from place to place, until there is no refuge or no rest. And we will pursue nations that provide aid or safe haven to terrorism. Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists. From this day forward, any nation that continues to harbor or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime. (Bush [2001](#))

This chapter explores the linkages between international and regional terrorism raised by the US ‘global war on terrorism’ with specific focus on Southeast Asia. We argue that the framework of international–regional linkages must be extended to include domestic considerations within individual nation-states. Before this complex issue can be explored, however, it is first necessary to raise a number of definitional and methodological issues.

There is no agreed definition of terrorism. Neither the League of Nations nor the United Nations has been able to come up with a definition of terrorism that is acceptable to the international community. Regional organisations such as the Organization of Islamic Conference and the

Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) have been similarly unsuccessful. The US government employs at least nineteen separate definitions, and a study published in 1988 identified 119 separate definitions used by the academic community (Schmid and Jongman [1988](#): 5–6).

In sum, governments and academic analysts have been free to pick and choose any definition of convenience when discussing groups that resort to political violence. Both the US and the United Kingdom, for example, proscribe terrorist groups. Although their separate lists of terrorist groups overlap, they are not congruent. Both the US and the UK proscribe terrorist groups that are not included on the other's list (Silke [2004](#): 5). This analytical confusion has carried over into the academic world where sloppy methodology has resulted in the classification of a variety of Southeast Asian militant Islamic groups as part of al-Qaeda's network.

For the purpose of this chapter, a terrorist organisation and its leadership are defined as those groups and individuals who have been proscribed by the United Nations through Security Council Resolution 1267. In Southeast Asia, in addition to al-Qaeda, only two Islamic extremist groups have been declared terrorist organisations: Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) and the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG).

Problematising 'linkages'

A central and highly contentious element in the scholarly discourse on terrorism is that of 'linkages'. Nearly all writers on terrorism build their analysis at least in part on 'links' which they assert exist between various terrorist groups and individuals. Some of the scholars who make the most extensive use of the term, such as Rohan Gunaratna, Zachary Abuza and Angel Rabasa, devote little or no space in their texts to defining its meaning. But their usage suggests that 'linkages' are interpreted in the broadest sense, covering everything from fleeting or casual acquaintances through to close and substantive relations of an ideological, familial, financial, political or social nature. Thus, Gunaratna can refer to the senior JI figure Hambali as having 'links' both to the al-Qaeda central leadership as well as to the Islamist movement, Hizbut Tahrir – he asserts Hambali was a member of both (Gunaratna [2002](#), [2004a](#)). Few scholars would disagree that Hambali had connections to al-Qaeda; indeed there is abundant evidence to show a pattern of regular communications and mutual facilitation between him and

his al-Qaeda counterparts. But in the case of Hizbut Tahrir, the connection would appear tenuous, not to say dubious. No evidence is adduced by Gunaratna to support the claim of membership in this organisation and it is doubtful that Hizbut Tahrir had much, if any, influence on Hambali's terrorist thinking. This example illustrates the risks of using 'links' to cover everything from well-established cases to the highly questionable.

When used in such an indiscriminate way, 'linkage' lacks analytical precision. For 'linkage' to have interpretive value, it needs to be carefully defined and reserved for instances of proven or prima facie substantive relationships. Thus, it is insufficient to imply that because particular Islamists trained together in Afghanistan or the Philippines, or draw inspiration from similar works, that they are all terrorists.

The case of Sri Pujimulyo Siswanto, a JI member in Central Java, illustrates this problem of undifferentiated 'links'. He was arrested for involvement in the second Bali bombing in 2005 on the basis that he provided shelter to Noordin Moh. Top and Dr Azhari Husin, the masterminds of the bombing. At first glance, this appears a clear-cut case: Siswanto was a member of a declared terrorist organisation, who harboured Indonesia's two most wanted terrorists. But a closer look at the case suggests that Siswanto may not, himself, have been a terrorist. He told police that in hiding the two fugitives, he 'only thought of protecting fellow Muslims even though I didn't agree with what they were doing and I knew protecting them was wrong'. He said Noordin tried to recruit him to the Bali bombing group but he rebuffed them saying that Indonesia was a 'place of preaching, not a place of war', and he questioned the loss of innocent Indonesian lives in past bombings (Siswanto [2006](#)). So, while it is clear that Siswanto has 'links' to terrorists, he clearly repudiated terrorist acts. Thus, without looking at the specific nature of the contact, establishing that there was a linkage tells us very little.

Some critics of terrorism studies reject the methodological validity of analysing 'links' and networks between terrorists. Natasha Hamilton-Hart, for example, ridicules terrorism scholars for becoming engaged 'in a pointless hunt for...terrorist links', as if they were amateur detectives. She contends that 'when it comes to clandestine terrorist activity...scholars and journalists are rarely in a position to either contest or add to official information' and this renders the academic study of terrorist networks 'quite pointless' (Hamilton-Hart [2005](#): 304, 320). Kit Collier, who has written extensively on Philippine Muslim radicalism, attacks this view as a parody of

the critique that she is seeking to make of terrorism studies and he asserts that 'in the hands of appropriately qualified, open-minded country specialists', the 'cataloguing of individual terrorists' movements, contacts and orders' is a valuable analytical tool (Collier [2006](#): 28). There can be little doubt of the value of plotting relationships in order to uncover sources of influence and patterns of behaviour. In one of the most highly regarded works on terrorism, Marc Sageman ([2004](#)) has argued persuasively for the importance of networks and cohort groups to understanding the dynamics of terrorism.

Framing international–regional–nation-state linkages

Immediately after 11 September, individual states in Southeast Asia pledged their support to the US to combat international terrorism. These pledges were reinforced by the heads of government of the original five ASEAN founders who separately made visits to Washington between September 2001 and May 2003. At the regional level both ASEAN and the ASEAN Regional Forum adopted declarations condemning terrorism and outlining measures to combat this threat. Both regional organisations also joined with the US in issuing joint declarations against terrorism.

Despite this outward veneer of unanimity there were distinct differences in how Southeast Asian states collectively and individually framed the issue of combating international terrorism. For example, the Philippines was alone in agreeing to the involvement of US special operations forces on its territory to target the ASG. While it is doubtful that the ASG constituted a 'terrorist group of global reach', Washington chose to frame its involvement as an extension of Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan (Maxwell [2004](#)). Thus the Philippines and by extension Southeast Asia was portrayed as the 'second front' in the 'global war on terrorism'. The Philippines sought US assistance in order to bolster its broader national security interests particularly against China.

Other Southeast Asian countries were less enthusiastic in their support for direct US military involvement in the region. They were quite willing to cooperate in such behind the scenes measures as intelligence exchange, anti-money laundering and border security measures. But they preferred to frame their anti-terrorism measures within the broader context of combating transnational crime and under the umbrella of UN-endorsed anti-terrorism measures. Singapore was quick to endorse the US view that terrorism in

Southeast Asia was all part of al-Qaeda's international network, but both Malaysia and Indonesia were more circumspect. When Malaysia successfully carried out pre-emptive anti-terror raids on JI's network in late 2001, it stressed these terrorists were domestic Islamic militants (Wain [2002a](#)). Indonesia cooperated mainly with Australia in rounding up the JI network but never proscribed JI as a terrorist organisation in its own right despite its UN Security Council listing. Government leaders in Thailand blamed violence in the southern border provinces which erupted in late 2001 as the work of criminals and bandits. They continued to deny that al-Qaeda had taken root on Thai soil until as late as August 2003 when JI's operations chief, Hambali, was arrested. As of this writing, intelligence analysts and regional-security specialists have been unable to demonstrate convincing linkages between al-Qaeda and those groups and individuals responsible for the rising wave of violence in the south.

In the aftermath of 11 September, and more particularly after the Bali bombings in October 2002, three distinct methodological approaches have emerged in the analysis of terrorism in Southeast Asia. These may be broadly characterised as international, regional and country-specific. Each approach will now be discussed.

The first methodological approach to the study of terrorism in Southeast Asia is that promoted by international terrorism experts. They have adopted what might be termed the al-Qaeda-centric paradigm. Gunaratna is perhaps the foremost representative of this methodology. His book, *Inside Al Qaeda*, which was hurriedly published in the wake of 11 September but before the Bali bombings of 2002, offered an unequivocal global view of al-Qaeda and its international network with an entire chapter devoted to Asia (Gunaratna [2002](#): 1). Gunaratna's study has been characterised by one former CIA analyst as a 'data dump' that uncritically includes a variety of militant and politically violent Islamic groups in al-Qaeda's international network (Byman [2003](#): 141). Quite often Gunaratna's assertions are not documented or rely on the dubious approach of asserting that vaguely defined 'linkages' between Southeast Asian leaders and groups and al-Qaeda constitute a 'command and control' relationship.

Gunaratna quickly became the favoured source of the global media because his book was one of the first available studies. Indeed, Gunaratna became so prominent that he succeeded in virtually colonising the discourse and analysis of terrorism in Southeast Asia. Whenever a major terrorist

incident occurred, Gunaratna invariably opined that there was only one organisation – al-Qaeda – with the capability and intention of conducting such an act. In other words, al-Qaeda was put forward as the key variable to explain terrorism in Southeast Asia.

Gunaratna and other international terrorism experts argued that the emergence of Islamic terrorism in Southeast Asia could be explained by the prime leadership role of bin Laden and his lieutenants in recruiting Muslim volunteers to fight alongside the mujahideen in Soviet-occupied Afghanistan (December 1979 to February 1989). In their view, this process began in the early 1980s when the first recruits from Southeast Asia arrived in Pakistan for indoctrination and training. Personal ties were forged between bin Laden and Abdurajak Abubakar Janjalani, the founder of the ASG in the Philippines, and Abdullah Sungkar, the founder of JI (Gunaratna [2002](#): 174, 187; Jones [forthcoming](#)).

According to this line of analysis, al-Qaeda's operatives made their first appearance in Southeast Asia in the late 1980s. They not only assisted in the recruitment of locals for religious indoctrination and training in terrorist camps in Pakistan but provided finance and operational support for local militant groups such as the ASG. As a result of these linkages both the ASG and JI were co-opted by al-Qaeda. In other words, according to international terrorism experts, bin Laden became a chief executive officer who presided over a network of subordinate franchises and affiliates.

After the US launched Operation Enduring Freedom and successfully dislodged the Taliban from power and smashed al-Qaeda's network of terrorist training camps in Afghanistan in the final quarter of 2001, al-Qaeda operatives were forced to disperse. According to international terrorism experts, Southeast Asia thus became al-Qaeda's second front. This theme was quickly picked up by regional security analysts (for two of the most egregious examples see Rosenthal [2003](#) and Singh [2007](#); for a balanced assessment, see Gershman [2002](#)).

Prior to the Bali bombings in 2002, regional security analysts focused on political violence committed by local insurgents and ethno-nationalist separatists. Their research generally overlooked or downplayed the linkages between politically violent Southeast Asian groups and al-Qaeda that were forged during the 1980s. After 11 September and the 2002 Bali bombings, regional security analysts all too readily adopted the al-Qaeda-centric paradigm as the prism through which they viewed Southeast Asia's politically

violent groups. As a consequence, their analyses tended to become homogenised. For example, regional security specialists invariably concluded that any international linkage between a local militant Islamic group and al-Qaeda was evidence of the former's subordination to the latter. In sum, the al-Qaeda connection was viewed by regional security analysts as the major variable explaining the emergence and spread of international terrorism in Southeast Asia.

Like international terrorism experts, regional security analysts concluded that local Islamic groups had become franchises subordinate to al-Qaeda. Because of the lack of a common definition of terrorism and the imprecision of 'linkages' as an analytic tool, regional analysts included all manner of militant groups as constituents of the al-Qaeda network. They commonly included such groups as the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), Kumpulan Mujahidin/Militen Malaysia (KMM), Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (MMI – Mujahideen Council of Indonesia), Laskar Jihad, Laskar Jundullah, Gerakan Aceh Merdeka (GAM, Free Aceh Movement), Pattani United Liberation Organisation (PULO), New PULO, Barisan Revolusi Nasional (BRN), Barisan Nasional Pembebasan Patani (BNP) and so on (the Philippines has resisted US pressures to designate MILF as a terrorist organisation; Wain [2002b](#)). This approach may be termed 'al-Qaeda plus' because regional analysts glossed over the enormous variations among terrorist groups in order to accommodate the al-Qaeda-centric paradigm promoted by international terrorism experts. In sum, they forced round pegs into square holes.

By contrast, country studies specialists brought a deep knowledge of history, politics, culture, religion, society and languages to their analysis of terrorism in Southeast Asia. Country studies specialists have been both sceptical and critical of the al-Qaeda-centric framework of analysis. The International Crisis Group (ICG [2001](#): 2) argued in a report published just after 11 September:

International concern has been focussed on the possibility that Muslim violence in Indonesia might be associated with terrorist organisations based in the Middle East but so far, at least, there is little firm public evidence to demonstrate such links. Several hundred Indonesians joined the Islamic resistance to the Soviet Union's occupation of Afghanistan in the 1980s and others have apparently received 'training' in that country since then but neither the numbers nor the nature of the 'training' are

clear. It has also been claimed that Osama bin Laden's network has provided financial support to a minority Muslim militia in Maluku. In any case, much of the violence in Indonesia involving Muslims can be adequately explained in domestic terms – although there is some evidence of limited involvement of foreigners.

Country specialists were initially put on the defensive because the mainstream international media was not able to digest detailed nuanced analysis about the linkages between al-Qaeda and Southeast Asia. The media wanted to portray ‘the big story’ that terrorism in Southeast Asia was part of al-Qaeda's international network headed by bin Laden, America's most wanted man. International terrorism experts and regional security analysts obliged with sound bites that were clear and simple and thus drowned out the views of country specialists.

The al-Qaeda–Southeast Asia nexus

The assertion by international and regional terrorism experts that the emergence of Islamic terrorism in Southeast Asia can be best analysed through an al-Qaeda-centric framework may be challenged by exploring three key methodological questions. The first is how to best characterise al-Qaeda as an organisation. The second is how to account for change over time. And the third is how to assess the question of agency in al-Qaeda's relations with regional terrorist groups such as JI.

International terrorism experts and regional security analysts generally view al-Qaeda as a hierarchical but broad-based organisation comprised of subordinate franchises and affiliates. Gunaratna ([2002](#): 57) portrays al-Qaeda as follows:

In 1998 al-Qaeda was reorganized into four distinct but interrelated entities. The first was a pyramidal structure to facilitate strategic and tactical direction; the second was a global terrorist network; the third was a base force for guerrilla warfare inside Afghanistan; and the fourth was a loose coalition of transnational terrorist and guerrilla groups.

The first entity, the hierarchical leadership structure, consisted of an Emir-General, a consultative council (*majlis shura*), four operational committees (military, finance and business, fatwa and Islamic study, and media and publicity) and dispersed regional ‘nodes’. Gunaratna ([2002](#): 58) further notes

that bin Laden directed the core inner group and the operational committees ensured the smooth day-to-day running of the organisation. An emir and a deputy headed each committee. The military committee, for example, was responsible for recruiting, training, procuring, transporting and launching terrorist operations. Al-Qaeda also ran its own internal security service and an extensive financial and business empire (Gunaratna [2002](#): 60–9).

Peter Bergin ([2001](#): 31) argued that al-Qaeda was run like a multinational corporation under the directorship of bin Laden:

Bin Laden organized al-Qaeda in a businesslike manner – he formulates the general-policies of al-Qaeda in consultation with his *shura* council. The *shura* makes executive decisions for the group. Subordinate to that council are other committees responsible for military affairs and the business interests of the group, as well as a *fatwa* committee, which issues rulings on Islamic law, and a media group.

Zachary Abuza ([2002](#): 429–30) writes that al-Qaeda is composed of a central leadership of around thirty individuals, an international network of twenty-four constituent groups, eighty front companies operating in fifty countries and a membership of between 5,000 and 12,000 organised into cells in sixty different countries. Finally, Abuza ([2002](#): 431) concludes that ‘Al Qaeda was brilliant in its co-optation of other groups, those with a narrow domestic agenda, and in bringing them into Al Qaeda's structure.’

Both Gunaratna's and Abuza's depiction of al-Qaeda's structure permits them to include virtually all Islamic terrorist groups and militant Muslims as belonging to one centrally directed network. This is one of the major methodological weaknesses of the al-Qaeda-centric paradigm. Jason Burke presents a powerful critique of this framework. He dismisses the notion that al-Qaeda was ‘a coherent and tight-knit organization, with “tentacles everywhere”, with a defined ideology and personnel, that had emerged as early as the late 1980s’. Burke argues that to accept such a view ‘is to misunderstand not only its true nature but also the nature of Islamic radicalism then and now. The contingent, dynamic and local elements of what is a broad and ill-defined movement rooted in historical trends of great complexity are lost’ (Burke [2003](#): 12).

According to Burke, al-Qaeda, as it is popularly conceived, ‘consisted of three elements. This tripartite division is essential to understanding the nature of both the “al-Qaeda” phenomenon and of modern Islamic militancy’ (the

quotations in this paragraph are taken from Burke [2003](#): 13–16). The first of these elements were composed of the ‘al-Qaeda hardcore’, numbering around 100 active ‘pre-eminent militants’, including a dozen close, long-term associates of bin Laden, many of whom had sworn an oath of loyalty to him. The inner core comprised veterans of the Afghan War or veterans of the conflicts in Bosnia or Chechnya. They acted as trainers and administrators in Afghanistan and on occasion were sent overseas to recruit, act as emissaries or, more rarely, to conduct specific terrorist operations. But, Burke cautions, ‘it is a mistake to see even this hardcore as monolithic in any way’ ([2003](#): 13).

The second of Burke's three elements comprises the scores of other militant Islamic groups operating around the world. But, Burke cautions, ‘a careful examination of the situation shows that the idea that there is an international network of active groups answering to bin Laden is wrong’. To label groups included in this second element as ‘al-Qaeda’ is ‘to denigrate the particular local factors that led to their emergence’ (Burke [2003](#): 14). Burke explains why this second element should not be included as constituting part of al-Qaeda:

But, though they may see bin Laden as a heroic figure, symbolic of their collective struggle, individuals and groups have their own leaders and their own agenda, often ones that are deeply parochial and which they will not subordinate to those of bin Laden or his close associates. Until very recently many were deeply antipathetic to bin Laden. As many remain rivals of bin Laden as have become allies.

(Burke [2003](#): 14)

Burke's assessment is shared by the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States ([2004](#): 67) whose final report concluded:

The inner core of al Qaeda continued to be a hierarchical top-down group with defined positions, tasks, and salaries. Most but not all in this core swore fealty (or *bayat*) to Bin Ladin. Other operatives were committed to Bin Ladin or to his goals and would take assignments for him, but they did not swear bayat and maintained, or tried to maintain, some autonomy. A looser circle of adherents might give money to al Qaeda or train in its camps but remained essentially independent.

Burke's third element comprising al-Qaeda consists of those individuals

who subscribe to ‘the idea, worldview, ideology of “al-Qaeda”’, in other words, ‘the vast, amorphous movement of modern radical Islam, with its myriad cells, domestic groups, “groupuscules” and splinters’ (2003: 16, 207). In sum, Burke unpacked the all-encompassing al-Qaeda-centric paradigm used by international and regional specialists and concluded that it is the hard core alone that comprises al-Qaeda (2003: 207).

The second methodological question in discussing al-Qaeda's role in Southeast Asia is how to account for change over time. International and regional terrorism experts adopt an approach that can be characterised as ‘back to the future’. In other words, their analysis of al-Qaeda's operations in Southeast Asia begins with the events of 11 September and works backwards in an ahistorical manner. Al-Qaeda is portrayed as a purposive international organisation, endowed with virtually unlimited resources, from the very start. It was as if bin Laden's announcement of the formation of the ‘World Islamic Front declaring jihad against “Jews and Crusaders” wherever they are found’, was made in 1988 and not 1998. According to the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States (2004: 59):

In now analyzing the terrorist programs carried out by members of this network, it would be misleading to apply the label ‘al-Qaeda operations’ too often in these early years [1992–6]. Yet it would be misleading to ignore the significance of these connections. And in this network, Bin Laden's agenda stood out.

With respect to Southeast Asia, it is important to note that militants from the region first journeyed to Pakistan as early as 1980 or at least eight years before al-Qaeda was founded and eighteen years before bin Laden launched his global *jihad*. It was during this early period that Southeast Asians forged personal links with leading figures in the mujahideen. One particularly influential figure was Abdul Rasul Sayyaf, a Pushtun warlord and leader of one of the four major mujahideen factions. It was under Sayyaf's patronage that key future leaders of the ASG and JI were trained at Camp Sadah in Pakistan. Sayyaf – not bin Laden – provided training facilities to the bulk of Southeast Asia's Muslim militants.

During this period, bin Laden and the bulk of his supporters were in exile in the Sudan (1991–6). While in the Sudan, bin Laden encountered serious financial difficulties as several of his companies ran out of funds. Bin Laden was forced ‘to cut back his spending and to control his outlays more closely’.

Bin Laden also wore out his welcome with the Sudanese government, which 'canceled the registration of the main business enterprises he had set up' and 'seized everything...[he] had possessed there'. According to the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, 'Bin Laden was in his weakest position since his early days in the war against the Soviet Union.' When he left for Afghanistan in May 1996, he and his organisation were 'significantly weakened, despite his ambitions and organizational skills' (2004: 62, 65, 63).

The decision to relocate to Afghanistan resulted in the disengagement by many of his supporters, some of whom went off in their own directions. It should be noted that bin Laden's decision to leave the Sudan for Afghanistan and shift his main objective from the 'near enemy' to the 'far enemy' provoked grave dissension within the ranks of his supporters. According to Sageman, bin Laden returned to Afghanistan with about 150 followers and '[m]any people stayed behind and left the jihad, which they believed was taking an uncomfortable turn. The return to Afghanistan was the occasion for another large purging of al-Qaeda of its less militant elements, who hesitated to take on the United States, with whom they had no quarrel and no legitimate fatwa' (Sageman [2004](#): 45). When bin Laden arrived in Afghanistan in 1996 the country was embroiled in a civil war as the Taliban initiated its drive to power.

According to Burke ([2003](#): 16), once ensconced in Afghanistan, bin Laden and his supporters 'even had a country they could virtually call their own. They were thus able to offer everything a state could offer to a militant group by way of support.' Al-Qaeda played the role of 'the state' by projecting its power and influence globally by using the huge financial resources and human capital available. Burke ([2003](#): 208) correctly argues, however, that al-Qaeda as an organisation was limited in time and space:

Something that can be labeled 'al-Qaeda' did exist between 1996 and 2001. It was composed of a small number of experienced militants who were able to access resources of a scale and with an ease that was hitherto unknown in Islamic militancy, largely by virtue of their position in Afghanistan and the sympathy of so many wealthy, and not so wealthy, Muslims across the Islamic world, though particularly in the Gulf.

In other words, it was only after bin Laden returned to Afghanistan in May

1996 (and more particularly 1998) that al-Qaeda emerged as an international *jihadi* terrorist organisation in its own right. In August 1996, al-Qaeda shifted its focus from the 'near enemy' and defensive *jihadi* to 'War Against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Two Holy Places' with a specific focus on Saudi Arabia. Bin Laden extended his reach globally in 1998 with the founding of the World Islamic Front and his fatwa against 'Jews and Crusaders'. As for Southeast Asia's militants, given the instability of the period when the Taliban initiated its drive to power, they decided in 1995 to decamp and relocate their training camps to the southern Philippines. In sum, from 1996, al-Qaeda in Afghanistan facilitated a global terrorist network through funding, services and facilities but did not control local leaders and their groups.

The third methodological question associated with the al-Qaeda-centric paradigm is how to assess the question of agency in al-Qaeda's relationship with JI and other Southeast Asian militant Islamic groups. International terrorism experts and regional security analysts invariably stress the importance of the role played by bin Laden and key members of al-Qaeda. They devote little attention to the question of agency when discussing Southeast Asians who joined the global *jihadi*. And equally important, their analyses often overlook the role of international terrorist 'freelancers'. International and regional terrorism experts invariably portray Muhammed Jamal Khalifa, Ramzi Yousef and Khalid Sheikh Mohammed as al-Qaeda agents when they operated in the Philippines in the late 1980s and mid-1990s, respectively. Historical evidence suggests they were freelancers and that Khalid Sheikh Mohammed affiliated with al-Qaeda at a later date. Yousef was a freelancer when he tried to blow up the World Trade Center in 1993 (Reeve [1999](#)).

Country studies specialists acknowledge the importance of international linkages between Southeast Asian groups and al-Qaeda, particularly the Afghan/Pakistani alumni connection, and regional linkages forged by JI. Where country specialists differ from international and regional terrorism experts is over the question of agency. That is, country specialists critically question the al-Qaeda-centric paradigm. Their focus is 'bottom up', that is, on the ability of Southeast Asians to act independently and to leverage their association with bin Laden and al-Qaeda to pursue their own agendas and objectives. The following section will examine the nexus between international and regional linkages with reference to JI, Southeast Asia's most

important terrorist organisation.

Jemaah Islamiyah–al-Qaeda relations

While Jemaah Islamiyah was not subordinate to al-Qaeda, there can be little doubting the latter's impact on JI thinking. Indeed, it can be argued that JI might not have taken the terrorist path from 2000 had it not been for al-Qaeda's influence. There are several elements to this argument. To begin with, bin Laden's fatwa of 1998, in which he called for attacks on the US and its allies, had a galvanising effect on the most radical sections of JI, the majority of whom were connected to the organisation's First Regional Command (Mantiqi I), which covered Singapore and Malaysia. This group, which included many Afghanistan-trained mujahideen such as Hambali, Mukhlas, Azhari Husin and Ali Imron, was already impatient for the organisation to begin attacking Islam's perceived enemies. Most had joined JI soon after its founding in 1993 and had spent five years building the organisation and strengthening its operational capacities. Following bin Laden's fatwa, Mantiqi I operatives began to plan seriously for bombings, initially against Christian and diplomatic targets in Indonesia, and later against Western targets. (It is important to note that this terrorist inclination was not shared by many other sections of JI, including it seems the organisation's founder, Abdullah Sungkar. His death in late 1999 and replacement as JI's emir by Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, a much less resolute leader, removed a major obstacle to the Mantiqi I militants in launching their attacks.)

Second, al-Qaeda attacks, particularly those of 11 September on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, inspired JI militants and confirmed in their minds the rightness of terrorist operations. In subsequent written texts and interviews, these figures rejoiced in the 'success' of the attacks in killing 'infidels' and in creating a fear of Islam in the West. Mukhlas, for example, wrote in his justification of the first Bali bombing that the against-the-odds 'triumph' of 11 September was proof of divine sanction for terrorist assaults against the West. He marvelled at the ability of the al-Qaeda attackers to penetrate the US defences and cause terror and destruction, stating: 'That's how it is when Almighty Allah wants all of this to occur' (Aly Ghufroon [2003](#)). Similarly, Imam Samudra described 11 September as a 'truly fantastic jihad operation' which had greatly humiliated the Americans, and commented

that those who carried this out were part of a group ‘preordained by God’ to wage ‘holy war’ against ‘colonising nations and their cronies’. He also praised bin Laden as a ‘great jihadist ulama’ and urged Muslims to follow his example (Samudra [2004](#)). Clearly the JI terrorists saw themselves as part of the same global *jihadist* movement as al-Qaeda and regarded the latter as a leading exponent of holy war.

Third, al-Qaeda provided valuable financial, technical and ideological assistance to JI operatives in planning and carrying out terrorist attacks. The first Bali bombing received funding from al-Qaeda of about US\$35,000 via the Malaysian Wan Min bin Wan Mat, which appears to have been the main source of money for the attack (ICG [2003](#): 29). There are similar reports of the JI splinter movement, led by Noordin Top, gaining thousands of dollars in al-Qaeda cash for the second Bali bombing. Moreover, it is also evident that JI bomb-makers, such as Dr Azhari Husin and Fathur Rahman al-Ghozi, gained information regarding techniques in bomb design and construction from al-Qaeda sources, including al-Qaeda websites and manuals. Lastly, new ideological thinking from al-Qaeda-affiliated scholars quickly made its way into JI circles, and was often translated and published in Indonesian soon after it appeared abroad.

Undoubtedly, the high point of this JI–al-Qaeda contact was between 1998 and 2002. Particularly for the operatives in Mantiqi I, there was frequent communication between key JI figures and their al-Qaeda counterparts. The most important JI leader in this context was Hambali, who had close relations with numerous senior al-Qaeda figures, but secondary lines of communication were also maintained through other JI operatives such as Mukhlis and Zulkarnaen. Even at the peak of this relationship, however, there is little evidence of JI being under the command of al-Qaeda. Indeed, the evidence points overwhelmingly to JI leaders making their own decisions about operations and neither receiving nor seeking direction from the al-Qaeda central leadership. Furthermore, JI's immediate focus throughout this period remained one of establishing an Islamic state in Indonesia rather than the more formal objective of restoring the caliphal system of transnational government.

After the 2002 Bali bombing, ties between JI and al-Qaeda attenuated rapidly. Many of those who had liaised between the two organisations were either captured or put to flight in the subsequent police crackdown, making the task of communicating with central al-Qaeda leaders not only more

difficult but also far more hazardous. In addition to this, the JI leaders who replaced Ba'asyir and militants such as Hambali and Mukhlas were intent on leading the organisation away from terrorism and giving greater emphasis to education and preaching. Acting emirs such as Abu Rusdan (2002–3) and Zarkasih (2006–7) made clear their opposition to al-Qaeda-style attacks on non-combatants and argued that such operations had set back JI rather than taken it closer to its stated objective of creating a totally Islamic political, legal and economic system in Indonesia (Jones [2007](#)). This was, in part, a repudiation of bin Laden's globalist 'far enemy' strategy.

The current leadership group within JI would appear to be more influenced by Indonesia's Darul Islam legacy than by al-Qaeda. The Darul Islam movement established an Indonesian Islamic State (NII) in 1949 and waged a violent rebellion until militarily crushed in 1962. Since the early 1970s, Darul Islam has operated as an underground movement, albeit highly fragmented and fractious. It has also been a major source of recruits for JI, and many of that organisation's leaders, such as Abu Rusdan, Abu Dujana and Zarkasih, come from strong Darul Islam families. While there remain significant differences between Darul Islam and JI, the 'Indonesia first' and 'near enemy' thinking of present JI leaders owes much to Darul Islam (Fealy [2007](#)).

Even among the terrorist offshoots of JI, a growing Indonesia-centrism is also apparent in the popularity of various *jihadist* texts emphasising operations within 'homeland' countries rather than fighting abroad. One example is Sheikh as-Salim's ([2005](#)) testament for mujahideen, which circulated widely in JI circles from late 2005. It stated:

I enjoin inhabitants of the Arabian peninsula not to wage jihad in Iraq... Don't go to Iraq but light the fire [of *jihad*] on the [Arabian] peninsula itself. Don't give them – the Crusaders – the chance to feel safe living there and don't allow them to feel calm and happy. In fact, I want your life to be always devoted to driving out the Crusaders.

In a similar vein is a monograph distributed within the JI community entitled 'The Tauhid Cell' in which readers are informed: 'Every day the number of people wanting to wage jihad increases, praise be to Allah. The problem is that they all want to go to Chechnya, Afghanistan or some other country where a jihad has taken place. This is their right. But what is more important than this is for us to liberate our own countries' (Anonymous no

date: 1–2). While these texts retain a transnational awareness, they prescribe a local scope of action. The message for Indonesian *jihadists* is that they can better assist the global struggle against Islam's enemies by mounting attacks within Southeast Asia than they can by joining insurgencies in the Middle East or Central Asia. It is also notable that no Indonesians have been among those killed or detained in the post-2003 *jihadist* insurgencies in Iraq or Afghanistan.

Developments in early 2008 suggest that some JI leaders may be turning their attention again to the Middle East, though the reasons for this are not yet entirely clear. In April 2008, two senior JI figures, Abu Husna and Dr Agus Purwantoro, were arrested with false passports in Johor, Malaysia, on their way to Syria. Husna was widely suspected of being the acting *amir* of JI and Agus had headed its operations in Central Sulawesi. Husna told police that he was seeking funding in Syria to train JI members. Singaporean officials have stated that he was seeking al-Qaeda money (*Straits Times*, 30 July 2008). Agus reportedly said that he wanted to join a medical team treating insurgents in Iraq. It is possible that both men left Indonesia to avoid capture by the police, in which case the unrelenting pressure on JI may force more of its members to seek sanctuary and financial support abroad.

Conclusion

This chapter has critically analysed the nexus between international and regional terrorism by examining the relationship between al-Qaeda and Jemaah Islamiyah. Four main conclusions can be drawn.

First, this analysis has uncovered the problematic nature of much of the literature on 'linkages' in explaining the international–regional nexus. Examining linkages can be a legitimate and valuable aspect of terrorism research, particularly for plotting relationships in order to uncover sources of influence and patterns of behaviour. However, international and regional terrorism specialists often use 'linkage' in such an ill-defined and indiscriminate way that it lacks analytical acuity and explanatory power.

Second, there can be no doubt that al-Qaeda had a significant impact on JI's radical elements by providing them with ideological direction, inspiration for operations, and valuable financial and technical assistance. This chapter has demonstrated that the 'al-Qaeda-centric paradigm' exaggerated the unity and cohesion of al-Qaeda itself as an international actor, and that al-Qaeda's

ties to JI fell away after 2002. Further, the empirical evidence demonstrates the overwhelming importance of agency by local actors in their dealings with al-Qaeda. JI and the ASG were never under the control of al-Qaeda. JI's leaders made their own operational decisions, and, particularly from 2003, these were based on parochial agendas, such as establishing an Islamic state in Indonesia, rather than al-Qaeda's objectives of attacking the West and restoring an Islamic caliphate. Indeed, the historical legacy of Darul Islam appears to have had greater impact on JI's mainstream leadership than al-Qaeda.

Third, this chapter has demonstrated the importance of domestic factors when evaluating the international–regional nexus between terrorist organisations. Attempts to portray Southeast Asia as the ‘second front’ in the war on terrorism gloss over significant differences among regional militant groups, as well as differences within JI itself. For example, no convincing evidence has been brought forward to link the conflict in southern Thailand with either global or regional terrorism. JI itself experienced sharp divisions between Mantiqi I and the rest of the organisation, and in 2002, Abu Bakar Ba’asyir was subject to intense criticism from other JI leaders for founding the formal, pro-sharia lobby movement, Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia. More recently, the splinter group led by Noordin Top has created tensions in JI as Noordin sought to attract, with only limited success, JI members to his network. JI may have created a regional network in its early years but JI was never an effective regional organisation, and much of its network quickly disintegrated in the face of counter-terrorism efforts by the states concerned.

Fourth, this chapter has demonstrated that many international and regional terrorism specialists have over-generalised the dynamics of terrorism, giving the impression that a single template can be used to view different *jihadi* groups across the regions of the world. We argue that terrorist groups vary markedly across time and place and that what might be true for al-Qaeda does not necessarily hold for JI. The dynamics within particular groups can change quickly. More than anything else, this chapter demonstrates the importance of fine-grained analysis by country specialists in examining the nexus between the international and regional dimensions of terrorism.

12 Nuclear weapons: Asian case studies and global ramifications

Marianne Hanson and Rajesh Rajagopalan

Introduction

This chapter examines the regional and global impacts of nuclear weapons development in two crucial areas of the Asia-Pacific: the South Asia subregion and North Korea. Both the South Asian and Northeast Asian subregions came to attention in the 1990s as a result of widespread concerns about nuclear weapons proliferation. While some of these concerns have been modified recently, this has occurred for very different reasons in each case. This has been a reflection of the quite different circumstances surrounding each of these developments, in terms of the motivations behind the states' search for nuclear weapons, the effects that each case of proliferation has had at the regional and global levels, and the way in which each of them has come to be viewed by the international community more broadly. What both episodes share, however, is the dubious distinction of having unsettled existing norms of regional and global strategic behaviour, of having 'thrown down the gauntlet' to prevailing nuclear powers dominating international security by crossing the nuclear threshold.

One way of viewing nuclear developments in these regions is to think of them as having become relatively 'settled'. The Indian–Pakistan case is seen as *sui generis*, and as such is not viewed as posing a threat to states outside this direct relationship (although the China factor cannot be separated from this case). Overall, it appears that the world has become used to a nuclear-armed India and Pakistan, with both states keen to demonstrate the apparent stability in their nuclear relationship, and the relatively low impact that this relationship has for strategic calculations at a broader global level. While its nuclear programme was seen as a profound threat to the region and as far afield as the United States, North Korea agreed, at the Six Party Talks in February 2007, to dismantle its nuclear weapons programme and rejoin the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). This process is still at an early stage. Concerns remain that the Pyongyang regime might yet go back on its word. Yet there have been encouraging indicators of a successful move to denuclearise the North. Added to this is a confidence that the new

rapprochement between Pyongyang and Seoul might provide the regional stability to underpin this denuclearisation.

This observation is not intended to project a premature sense of optimism. While tensions in both arenas have lessened, there remains the potential for either case to deteriorate markedly: in the case of South Asia with an escalation of threat between the two antagonists, and in North Korea with any reversal of the Six Party Talks achievements or a renewed perception of threat by the ruling regime. Both cases will need continuing careful management and monitoring if a slide into catastrophe is to be averted.

Nuclear weapons in South Asia

Nuclear weapons programmes in South Asia are driven not so much by global politics but by traditional national security concerns and a subregional ‘security dilemma’. India's nuclear weapons programme was driven by both the Chinese and Pakistani nuclear advances. Similarly, Pakistan's nuclear weapons programme is driven by fear of India. Nevertheless, global nuclear politics have impinged on these programmes which, in turn, have affected global nuclear politics. Global nuclear politics, in particular, the norms of the global nuclear non-proliferation order, have been a serious constraint on the Indian and Pakistani programmes. Another global dimension is the possible effects of US–China nuclear competition. China's nuclear modernisation programme, either as a response to the nuclear balance with the United States, or as a response to US plans to deploy a ballistic missile defence (BMD) system, is also a factor in India's modernisation programme. As Sino-American strategic competition has its own set of unique dynamics, this chapter will focus primarily – but not exclusively – on the likely global impact of Indian and Pakistani nuclear weapons programmes and modernisation.

Nuclear weapons programmes and modernisation in South Asia

Both India and Pakistan are known to be actively modernising their nuclear arsenals, although details about their current capabilities and future plans are uncertain. Neither country releases detailed information officially, but some capabilities, such as the development of delivery vehicles, cannot be kept hidden. Indeed, both India and Pakistan appear more than prone to disclose publicly the relative success or failures of specific missile tests. Witness New Delhi's immediate disclosure of a failed *Agni III* intermediate-range ballistic

missile test in July 2006, or its announcements of the nuclear-capable short-range ballistic missile tests, including the *Dhanush* in December 2005 and *Prithvi* I in May 2005 and June 2006. In mid-2006, Pakistan announced the successful test of the *Hatf* IV (also known as the *Shaheen* I). This ‘tit-for-tat’ process of transparency seems geared towards ensuring that each is aware of the other’s proficiency in nuclear delivery capabilities and is formally embedded in an October 2005 bilateral agreement on advanced notification of ballistic-missile test flights (Henry L. Stimson Center [2006](#); IISS [2007](#): 306).

Yet the pace of these weapons developments has been sedate. Comparing current estimates of Indian and Pakistani nuclear weapons capability with what was estimated in 1998, when each conducted their nuclear tests, suggests that there has not been any huge growth in the two arsenals. Estimates in 1998 by David Albright of the Institute for Science and International Security stated that India had about 290 kilograms of weapons-grade plutonium, which translates roughly to 60 weapons (assuming 5 kilos per weapon). The same analysis estimated that Pakistan had about 550 kilograms of weapons-grade uranium, sufficient for about 30 weapons (Albright [1999](#)). These estimates were hazy at best, as the analyses made clear. Ten years later, these assessments have not changed greatly: the most recent estimates, provided by the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), estimated that India had sufficient fissile materials (weapons-grade plutonium) for about 100 weapons, although it had actually assembled only around 50 to 60 weapons (Norris and Kristensen [2007a](#)). (It should be noted that the NRDC’s methodology is somewhat questionable because it counts the weapons on the basis of the number of delivery vehicles; this might underestimate the total weapon strength because India could have potentially produced more warheads than it has delivery vehicles. This is particularly likely because, as the report notes, India still depends more on aircraft than on missiles for delivering its nuclear arsenal and hence could have produced more than the equivalent of one warhead per delivery vehicle.) In a similar report on Pakistan, the NRDC estimated that Pakistan had about 60 warheads (Norris and Kristensen [2007b](#)). Other estimates have been roughly comparable: the US Congressional Research Service, for example, estimated that both India and Pakistan had around 55 to 115 nuclear warheads each (Kronstadt [2007](#): 30).

What this suggests is that neither country is rapidly expanding its nuclear force capability. Each is adding about two to four weapons every year,

according to these estimates, which represents a rather measured pace. Both sides have devoted greater effort to their missile and other delivery vehicle programmes. But even here, the pace of acquisition has been slow, despite some alarmist reportage (see, for example, Greenlees [2007](#)). A quarter century after the Indian Guided Missile Development Programme began, India has yet to deploy a missile that can target all of China (although it has tested the *Agni* III intermediate-range ballistic missile (IRBM) which has a range sufficient to cover a significant part of China, and is planning an even longer-range version of this missile) (Mallikarjun [2007](#)). As suggested earlier, India's nuclear weapons programme is largely thought to be still relying on aircraft as the primary mode of delivery. India has developed and tested at least four ballistic missiles: the *Prithvi* short-range ballistic missile (SRBM), the *Agni* I SRBM, the *Agni* II MRBM and the *Agni* III IRBM. However, only the *Prithvi* – a short-range, cumbersome, liquid-fuelled missile – is known to be deployed.¹ The status of other missiles is unclear because of contradictory reports emanating from Indian officials (Norris and Kristensen [2007a](#)).

Pakistan has tested four ballistic missiles and two cruise missiles, all thought to have been built either with North Korean or Chinese assistance. These include the *Shaheen* I (or *Hatf* IV) and *Ghaznavi* SRBMs and the *Ghauri* and *Shaheen* II IRBMs. Pakistan also has combat aircraft, including the US-built F-16 fighter-bomber, which could be used for nuclear weapon delivery. These vehicles have the range to cover most of India, and once fully deployed, will represent a significant deterrence capability *vis-à-vis* India.

For different reasons, in addition to ballistic missiles, both India and Pakistan have also been looking at long-range cruise missiles, although it is unclear at this time whether they are capable of being weapons of mass destruction (WMD) delivery vehicles. India has collaborated with Russia in developing the *Brahmos* missile, although it is not yet thought to have a nuclear delivery role. Pakistan, on the other hand, has acquired a cruise missile (the *Babur*), possibly based on Chinese technology, that has a potential strategic role. For Pakistan, developing cruise missiles for strategic roles is important because cruise missiles could possibly negate any Indian anti-ballistic missile system, and may even be useful in convincing India of the futility of deploying such anti-ballistic missile systems.

Some analysts have expressed concerns about the possibility that the US–India nuclear deal could intensify a nuclear arms race in South Asia.

Although Pakistan has expressed concern over this accord, its worry has less to do with any rapid increase in the Indian arsenal and more to do with what it does to the political relations in the US–India–Pakistan triangle and about the inequity in the treatment of the two countries by the US and the international community (*Dawn* [2005](#)). (Resistance to this deal in any case remains strong, both within nationalist elements of the Indian parliament – causing some impatience in Washington – and also at the broader global level where it is feared that US nuclear cooperation with a non-NPT state sets an undesirable precedent that adds to the already weakened status of that treaty; it is possible therefore that the arrangement might not be ratified.)

If the US–India nuclear deal does go ahead, it has the potential to expand the Indian nuclear weapons capability simply by diverting talent, resources and material from India's struggling energy sector to the weapons programme. Yet it is unlikely that such a diversion would take place. Indeed, India has yet to exploit fully even those resources that it does have to expand its nuclear arsenal. For example, Indian fissile material stocks are estimated to be approximately ten tons, although India is thought to have used only a small portion of this for its strategic programme. In other words, the slow pace of the weapons programme is unrelated to any scarcities that the programme faces.

Overall, then, although WMD modernisation is taking place in India and Pakistan, the process has been slow and uneven. Evidence of an arms race, or, more specifically, an ‘action–reaction spiral’ between India and Pakistan in the nuclear arena is mixed: both countries have occasionally reacted to developments across the border (Pakistani reactions to Indian BMD plans are a good example), but the primary drivers determining the pace of the programme appear to be internal factors rather than external ones. Moreover, neither country has heretofore defined nuclear deterrence capability in terms of numbers or parity of weapons. Rather, both countries have seen nuclear deterrence as a function of a minimal retaliatory capability, which reduces the pressure to respond to every incremental addition of capability on the opposing side.

Nuclear modernisation in South Asia and its effects on global balances

There are at least two ways in which we can visualise the effect of nuclear modernisation in South Asia on global power balances. The first is the possibility that South Asian nuclear programmes can directly affect the global

nuclear balance. A second possibility is that an Indian missile defence programme can lead to a strategic competition with China, with resultant global effects.

Effects on global balances

Until now, Asian nuclear weapons programmes have not had a significant impact on the international balance of power. Although China's nuclear potential is increasingly worrying to Washington, many of the early predictions about a significant growth in the Chinese nuclear arsenal and changes in Chinese nuclear doctrines have not materialised. For example, Alastair Iain Johnston ([1995/96](#)) predicted more than a decade ago that China was moving away from its 'minimum deterrence' doctrine to a 'limited deterrence' doctrine. But there is little indication of any such dramatic change in Chinese doctrine or force structure just yet. Is it possible that nuclear modernisation in South Asia could lead to a nuclear arms race spiral that leads to a more rapid Chinese growth? A decade after the South Asian nuclear tests, and almost two decades after both India and Pakistan began building their arsenals, there is little to indicate that China's nuclear posture has been significantly impacted by the nuclear developments south of the Himalayas (for an early assessment that reached similar conclusions, see Zhang [1999](#); see also Woodward [2003](#): 238). American nuclear force capabilities, and Washington's potential development of a BMD system, have been far more important in China's calculations than have been developments in South Asia.²

This might not last. China's quiescence until now might have been the consequence of India simply lacking the capability directly to affect or threaten China with its nuclear weapons. Beijing may have been satisfied with merely supporting Pakistan's efforts to balance India within South Asia. But as the power and reach of Indian strategic capabilities grow, it is unlikely that China will not be affected. As noted above, India has successfully tested the *Agni III* IRBM with a range sufficient to cover a significant part of China, and Indian scientists have revealed that they are planning an even longer-range version of the missile (Mallikarjun [2007](#)). While this might not happen for a few more years, it is possible that China could in the future react to India's growing strategic challenge by increasing its own strategic capabilities, thus affecting the global balance.³ It must be noted, however, that China, like India, also subscribes to a minimum deterrent doctrine which

does not prescribe parity or superiority as essential to achieve nuclear deterrence (Roberts [2003](#)). In addition, China already has sufficient deterrent capability *vis-à-vis* India, which should reduce the pressures on Beijing to expand its deterrent force as a response to emerging Indian nuclear capabilities.

Missile defences

India has been pursuing a BMD capability for over a decade, but this has been a haphazard search, apparently being pushed by the political-technocratic elite rather than by the military (Rajagopalan [2005](#)). There is little indication that India has even considered seriously the difficulties of deploying a BMD system or an appropriate system architecture; nor is there domestic political consensus on the need for such systems (Pant [2005](#)). It is also unclear whether India intends to buy such a BMD system off-the-shelf from foreign sources or whether it plans to develop them locally.⁴ In short, despite considering this issue for more than a decade, New Delhi appears no closer to making up its mind about whether it needs such systems.

Nevertheless, if India does deploy a BMD system, it could have a serious effect on Pakistani *perceptions* about their deterrent capability and, possibly, spur Pakistan into acquiring and deploying much larger numbers of missiles (for an early Pakistani view on the general impact of BMDs in the region, see Ahmed [2002](#)). For example, Pakistan's interest in cruise missiles is at least partly the result of Islamabad's fear that India will deploy a BMD system.

BMD could also complicate the strategic balance between India and China. If India were to deploy a BMD system, or become part of a larger US-led BMD architecture in the Asia-Pacific region, China might feel pressured to respond (Swaine with Runyon [2002](#)). Alternatively, the Indian deterrent calculus could be upset if China feels the need to expand vastly its current nuclear arsenal to deal with the threat of a US BMD system. However, mitigating factors also need to be noted: an effective US BMD screen is a long way off, and an Indian BMD deployment is even farther away. Nevertheless, the BMD issue needs to be continually monitored because of its potential to affect Chinese deterrence calculations.

Effect on global non-proliferation norms

Nuclear danger

Any increase in the levels of the nuclear danger in the South Asian region

could affect global security in at least two ways. First, nuclear weapons use, even if confined to India and Pakistan, cannot but affect the other states of South Asia as well as neighbouring regions such as Southeast Asia and the Middle East, both critical to the global economy. Even if the rest of the world does not suffer a direct nuclear assault, it cannot hope to escape the indirect effects of a nuclear exchange in the region. Second, any nuclear weapons use in South Asia will also affect important global norms about nuclear weapons. The 'tradition of non-use of nuclear weapons', as Thomas Schelling (1980: 260) put it, has been a significant factor in creating a strong norm against the use of nuclear weapons and a somewhat less strong norm against the spread of nuclear weapons. This norm of non-use is so strong that it has been characterised as a taboo (Tannenwald 2005). By way of illustration, every one of the five original nuclear powers has lost at least one war without resorting to use nuclear weapons to alter the outcome.⁵ If this taboo were to be broken, it could create further pressures both for nuclear weapons spread as well as nuclear use.

However, there is little indication that the limited nuclear modernisation underway in South Asia is in itself increasing the nuclear danger. India and Pakistan have fairly moderate nuclear doctrines which emphasise caution, although India has moved slightly away from its original 'no first use' (NFU) nuclear doctrine. The NFU was emphasised in early Indian doctrinal pronouncements and in 1999, when the National Security Advisory Board (NSAB) released its doctrinal recommendation, it too proposed the NFU.⁶ Nevertheless, when the Indian government finally released its official nuclear doctrine in January 2003, the NFU pledge had been diluted: the NFU was now limited to just responses to nuclear threats (Government of India 2003). In other words, India could potentially use nuclear weapons in retaliation for attacks with other types of WMD such as chemical and biological weapons. Such modifications appear to be ad hoc responses to temporary pressures rather than a considered response to a strategic problem. Nevertheless, these unwarranted changes do increase the potential for nuclear danger in the region.

Pakistan's nuclear doctrine may be regarded as somewhat more adventurous, especially by the Indian establishment, because of its refusal to accept an NFU policy and its explicit support for a first-use doctrine. Nevertheless, Pakistan's nuclear doctrine can best be summed up as 'first-use-but-last-resort' and in many ways is similar to Indian nuclear doctrine. The

relatively 'relaxed' nature of the two doctrines forms the primary underpinning for nuclear stability in the region.

Despite some of the changes noted above (applicable more to Indian rather than Pakistani nuclear doctrine), both the Indian and Pakistani nuclear doctrines emphasise nuclear forces that are limited and de-alerted, focusing on safety rather than speed of any retaliatory response. De-alerted nuclear forces reduce nuclear risks in a variety of ways. They cut down the likelihood of accidents, theft, unauthorised and hasty use of nuclear weapons. Yet de-alerted forces also carry with them the risk of vulnerability to an enemy attack. Notwithstanding this danger, both Indian and Pakistani decision-makers appear confident that the risk of nuclear vulnerability is acceptable. This reflects their comparatively benign view of the nuclear threat and the strategic balance in the South Asian subregion.⁷

Demonstration effect

Another way in which the nuclearisation of South Asia could potentially affect the global nuclear regime is through a 'demonstration effect'. By demonstrating their ability to field and sustain national nuclear postures and capabilities, India and Pakistan may be encouraging other countries to reach for nuclear arms, violating commitments that they have made to the global nuclear non-proliferation regime (Albright [1998](#), for example, has made such assertions). If there is such a demonstration phenomenon at play, it would be accelerated by measures that seek to legitimise such a violation of the global nuclear order, such as the proposed US–India nuclear agreement. Much of the criticism from the non-proliferation activists has made precisely this point: as Sharon Squassoni ([2007b](#)) has pointed out, 'it seems hypocritical to bend the rules to offer nuclear goodies to an India that has the bomb, while seeking ever tougher sanctions on Iran, which doesn't have it'.

But arguments related specifically to the demonstration effect of India and Pakistan do not appear particularly convincing when seen against the light of empirical evidence. States that have pursued nuclear weapons programmes since the non-proliferation norms were institutionalised in the NPT in 1968 sought these weapons because they faced significant threats to which nuclear weapons were perceived as the only solution, rather than because of any example set by India and Pakistan. Israel, South Africa, Taiwan, Pakistan, Iraq, North Korea, Iran and Libya – the most serious of these cases – were all driven to consider the development of nuclear weapons capabilities by

perceptions of serious external threat, or a desire for national power and prestige, rather than because of the demonstration effect of other successful proliferators (for an overview of some of these cases, see Cirincione, Wolfsthal and Rajkumar [2002](#)). Indeed, in all of these cases, national nuclear weapons programmes began before India and Pakistan became overt nuclear powers in 1998.

Both the North Korean and the Iranian cases demonstrate this. The North Korean nuclear programme, as the following section will show, was underway well before India and Pakistan had built their nuclear arsenals, and indeed was developed during years of tight international sanctions on the Indian and Pakistani nuclear programme. This chronology would make it difficult to suggest that South Asian nuclear proliferation was a factor in Pyongyang's calculations. Local security concerns appear to be a much more likely motivation.

These factors are equally applicable in the case of Iran. Although Iran has yet to build a nuclear weapon, and the ultimate objective of its nuclear programme remains unclear, Iran's pursuit of technologies that are not entirely necessary at this stage for its civil nuclear power programme is suspicious (Squassoni [2007a](#)). If we assume that Iran is seeking nuclear weapons, then the Iranian programme chronology also suggests little direct connection to South Asian nuclear advances. Iran began pursuing uranium enrichment and plutonium reprocessing technologies in the mid-1970s, under the Shah's regime. Although the programme was briefly halted after the Islamic revolution, it was resuscitated in the 1980s. As in the North Korean programme, the programme was a response to what Teheran perceived as a WMD threat from Iraq and Israel (Jones [1998](#)). Thus while Squassoni's claim that the US deal allows India to be an exception to the rule of non-cooperation with a state outside the NPT is valid, a view that the India–Pakistan programmes act as an incentive to other states to acquire nuclear weapons is hard to sustain.

Similarly, potential future nuclear spread is likely to be a response to specific local threat assessments rather than the consequence of any demonstration effect of South Asian nuclear programmes (for an innovative approach to future proliferation threats, see Lavoy [2006](#)). States of concern in this regard – Japan, South Korea and perhaps Saudi Arabia and Egypt – are likely to be responding to nuclear threats in their own neighbourhood. If Japan should 'go nuclear', an as yet remote possibility, it is likely to be a

response to North Korea's nuclear weapons, or even to threats from China (Mochizuki [2007](#)). Should Japan do this, it might increase pressures on South Korea to respond. In the Middle East, Saudi Arabia and Egypt will be under pressure to respond to any successful Iranian nuclear weapon programme. In all these cases, local nuclear imbalances are likely to be the primary imperative.

The nuclear crisis in North Korea

In some contrast to the case in South Asia, the North Korean (Democratic People's Republic of Korea, or DPRK) nuclear crisis – manifested most clearly by Pyongyang's testing of a nuclear device on 9 October 2006 – has been widely affected by, and itself affects, a broader global security dynamic. Not only has the immediate Northeast Asian region been the site of crisis and concern; the DPRK's decisions have closely involved the US, alarmed states as far away as Europe and Australia, and challenged global non-proliferation norms at the highest level.

North Korea's civilian nuclear programme evolved from the 1950s, its weapons ambitions becoming apparent in the early 1990s. Global concerns about its levels of reprocessed plutonium, its refusal to allow the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors access to the country (something it had allowed only briefly in 1992, although it had joined the NPT in 1985) and its threat to withdraw from the NPT all prompted an international crisis in 1994. Diplomatic pressure and the possibility of US air strikes were maintained until the crisis appeared to have been resolved with the Agreed Framework concluded between the DPRK and the US. This agreement saw the former agree to freeze its nuclear programme and readmit IAEA inspectors in exchange for oil supplies and the building of light-water power plants by the US, Japan and South Korea (for details of this period in the development of North Korea's nuclear programme, see Albright and O'Neill [2000](#); Mansourov [1995](#); Samore [2004](#); Wit, Poneman and Gallucci [2004](#); and the various reports and articles of CNS [2007](#)).

By 2001, it had become apparent that this agreement was falling apart, a result of inconsistencies and failed promises on both sides, but also because of the deteriorating relationship between Pyongyang and the newly elected George W. Bush administration in Washington (Cha and Kang [2003](#)). The 'sunshine policy' between North and South Korea, while it had presaged

improvements in direct relations, was also affected badly by these developments (Pritchard [2007](#)). By 2002, there were renewed fears that North Korea had started a programme of uranium enrichment. In October of that year, Pyongyang admitted to having developed a nuclear weapon. In December, North Korea removed its freeze on its plutonium-based nuclear programme, again refused to admit IAEA inspectors and announced its intention to withdraw from the NPT the following month.

There is no doubt that the Bush administration's adoption of a more hostile stance towards North Korea, and its incorporation of that country into the infamous 'axis of evil', had resulted in a more recalcitrant North Korean leader. However, Kim Jong Il also appeared concerned about a possible US pre-emptive strike, especially in light of the war in Iraq, where it appeared that the US was insistent on achieving its aim of an Iraqi regime change (Smith [2006](#)). Thus the driving force behind the North Korean nuclear programme – if not in 1994, then almost certainly by a decade later – appears to have been at least in part security concerns about US plans for the region and the deployment of US nuclear weapons in the South (Pinkston [2005](#)). Undoubtedly, a further motivation was the DPRK's sense that a nuclear standoff was seen as likely to provide the material benefits needed by the Kim regime.

The Six Party Talks (involving North and South Korea, the United States, Russia, China and Japan), aimed at coaxing the DPRK out of its by now rigid and clearly anti-US stance, proceeded over the next few years, largely with negative results (Reiss [2006](#)). However, the fourth round of these negotiations in September 2005, in which China played an instrumental and constructive role, led to a breakthrough. At this juncture, Pyongyang agreed to abandon its civilian and military nuclear weapon programmes and return to the NPT. In return, other members of the Six Party Talks promised security assurances, stronger economic relations and eventual political normalisation (Kerr [2005](#)). Security guarantees from the United States were of particular importance to the regime: the US affirmed that it had no intention of attacking the DPRK with conventional or nuclear weapons, that it would respect North Korea's sovereignty and work to normalise its relations with that state (Cossa [2005](#); Kerr [2005](#): 8).

The agreement promised a significantly more positive phase in US–North Korean relations. This was lost soon after when the US raised further issues with the DPRK: Washington imposed sanctions on a Macau bank, accusing it

of money laundering for the DPRK, and aggressively pursued smuggling and drug trafficking charges against the regime as well as the highly troublesome question of Japanese abductees. Unsurprisingly, Kim Jong Il revoked the September agreement. Relations between the US and North Korea continued to decline, with Kim Jong Il requesting direct talks with Washington, and Bush refusing to grant them. The crisis reached a critical point when the DPRK, against all exhortations, tested its nuclear device thirteen months later. This test was conducted on 9 October 2006 in the North Hamgyong province, and while there was some contention about the size of the test and whether in fact it had been a nuclear test at all, confirmation of a nuclear test of somewhat less than one kiloton was provided within days (Garwin and von Hippel [2006](#)).

North Korean nuclear and missile capabilities

Findings by the IAEA, together with a US National Intelligence Report, estimated that as early as 2001, the DPRK might have reprocessed enough plutonium for one or possibly two nuclear weapons (Nuclear Threat Initiative [2007](#)). There remains doubt about the extent of such weapons production, however, and as of early November 2007, North Korea had yet to declare the full extent of its weapons arsenal. Robert Norris of the NRDC nevertheless assesses that the DPRK had, by 2006, produced about 43 kilograms of separated plutonium, which could, depending on that state's technical capabilities and the yield of any bomb, have resulted in the production of between five and fifteen weapons (Norris [2006](#)).

As with the case of India and Pakistan, an accompanying missile programme has added to security concerns surrounding Pyongyang's intentions. North Korea's missile capability has caused grave regional and international concern. So too has its record of proliferation to other states of concern, whether it be its propensity to export its nuclear technology (Chestnut [2007](#)) or its ballistic missile knowledge; it is believed to have exported missile materials and technology to Egypt, Syria, Libya, Iran, Pakistan and Yemen (Nuclear Threat Initiative [2007](#)).

North Korea's short-range missile arsenal includes the KN02 with a range of 10 to 120 kilometres, the 500-kilometre range *Scud-C* and the 800-kilometre *Scud-D* missiles. The DPRK has also demonstrated a programme of medium- and intermediate-range missiles: it tested the 1,300-kilometre range *Nodong* missile, of which it has up to 200 deployed, in 1993 and again

in 2006. In 1998, it tested the *Taepodong* I with a range of 1,800 kilometres, flying this over the Japanese island of Honshu and causing widespread regional and international alarm (Nuclear Threat Initiative [2007](#); Boese [2007](#)). Its long-range 4,000–6,000-kilometre inter-continental ballistic missile, the *Taepodong* II, was tested in July 2006, at the height of tensions and failure of the Six Party Talks following the breakdown of the September 2005 agreement, but failed to reach its target after achieving less than a minute in flight (Nuclear Threat Initiative [2007](#); Boese [2007](#)). With the potential to reach the US mainland, the *Taepodong* II, notwithstanding the failure of the 2006 test, remains of great concern internationally.

Responding to the North Korean nuclear crisis: regional and global impact

Pyongyang's actions did nothing to build security and confidence in the region; both the test and the various missile launchings that preceded it represented some of the most overtly aggressive actions seen in the region in the past decade. Responses to the nuclear test were unanimous in their condemnation. Analysts and political leaders called for strong sanctions, with some even arguing outright for military action against the DPRK. The test was widely seen as a violation of non-proliferation norms and a hostile gesture to the international community. But the question of what to do subsequently did not bring any simple answers. It was recognised that both sanctions and military action would carry with them substantial problems, and possibly destabilise the Korean peninsula to the point where massive population upheavals would result, something that the DPRK's neighbours China, Japan and South Korea clearly did not wish to see. Ultimately, it became clear to the driver of the Six Party Talks, the US, that the only feasible option was to resume negotiations with Pyongyang. Even so, direct talks with North Korea – the DPRK's preferred method of contact – continued to be resisted by Washington. Talks restarted in earnest in December 2006, this time displaying a more concerted wish on the part of the US to achieve a breakthrough. Notable by now was the growing importance of China which, while it had not been able to prevent North Korea from testing, was nevertheless seen as the key in persuading Pyongyang to return to talks and agree to denuclearisation.

The result was the historic agreement achieved in Beijing on 13 February 2007. This reasserted the September 2005 Joint Agreement, in which Pyongyang agreed to declare its activities and disable its nuclear facilities in

exchange for security assurances and a series of political and economic incentives – most notable of which was the promise by the US, China, Russia and South Korea to provide the DPRK with one million metric tons of heavy fuel oil. Further, the US would begin the process of removing North Korea from its list of state sponsors of terrorism, and easing existing economic sanctions, leading to a political normalisation of relations between the two states. The deal also established five working parties to address outstanding issues (such as the highly charged Japanese abductees issue) thus delinking them to some extent from the paramount need to achieve denuclearisation (*International Herald Tribune* [2007](#); Hyman [2007](#)). The agreement represented the best hopes achieved for reversing what would be a dangerous trend in Northeast Asian security policy: apart from the risks of a nuclear strike that proliferation posed in itself, any continued possession of nuclear weapons by North Korea would place pressure on South Korea and Japan to consider their own nuclear options, a factor which if put into practice would quickly have destabilising effects on the entire region.

Indeed, the potential regional impact of North Korea's nuclear programme was profoundly evident from the 1994 crisis onwards, and especially so after the test of 2006. The test meant that yet another state had crossed the nuclear threshold, bringing a total of four nuclear weapon states outside of the NPT – with three of these being in Asia (India, Pakistan and North Korea).

But of most immediate concern was the potential that a nuclear-armed North Korea might spark a round of nuclear proliferation in Japan and South Korea, itself a possible trigger for a wider wave of Asian proliferation. The stance taken by Japan's Prime Minister at the time, Shinzo Abe, was seen as particularly aggressive towards Pyongyang, although Abe had been elected at least partly on the basis of promising a tougher approach towards the North Korean threat than his predecessor had shown (Mochizuki [2007](#)). Nevertheless, while there was a modicum of global concern that Japan might be tempted to reverse its non-nuclear weapon status, this was not considered as a serious option. A more likely impact for Japan has been a strengthening of its alliance with the United States coupled with continuing development of a robust conventional weapon defence capability (Izumi and Furukawa [2007](#); Mochizuki [2007](#)). Notwithstanding the (in any case relatively mild) nuclear weapons comments made by a speaker affiliated with the ruling Liberal Democratic Party, it was generally believed that Pyongyang's actions would not lead to the development of Japanese nuclear weapons and a subsequent

‘tsunami of proliferation in Asian countries’ (Izumi and Furukawa [2007](#)).

One of the most notable regional developments in addressing the North Korean nuclear crisis, namely China's participation in the Six Party Talks, has produced a substantial global impact. China rose in importance as a player in the course of the Six Party Talks, to the point where by 2005 its influence over North Korea was seen as indispensable in achieving a resolution of the crisis. China had agreed to (modified) US demands for sanctions, agreeing eventually to UN Security Council Resolutions against Pyongyang, and continued to exert pressure on the regime to resume negotiations after the breakdown of 2005. Particularly from this time, Beijing was seen as having moved from being something of a neutral party towards a more assertive presence able to bridge the extreme views held by Washington and Pyongyang and ‘reorient the talks to the long-term interest of regional security and economic prosperity’ (Qian and Wu [2005](#)). China earned considerable merit in the eyes of neighbouring states (Korean Nuclear Talks [2005](#)) as well as in the US, at a time when there had been a lull in any positive or dynamic relationship between Washington and Beijing. Indeed, one unexpected outcome of the Korean nuclear crisis has been a widespread affirmation of the approach taken by China, viewed as a result of its commitment to the process as ‘a responsible regional player and re-emerging world power’ (Qian and Wu [2005](#)). In the ongoing process of denuclearisation of the peninsula, China will continue to have a vital role, both in ensuring that Pyongyang honours its commitments, but also in providing its ally North Korea with steady support during what will likely be a difficult period of transition for that country.

A further global impact of the crisis can be seen in terms of the evolution of US behaviour during the course of the talks. President Bush had demonstrated a hawkish attitude towards Pyongyang from the time of his election, most likely connected to a wish to distance the new administration from the policies, and especially the Agreed Framework, adopted by President Bill Clinton. This stance, however, can be said to have unwisely discarded what was in 2000 a still salvageable negotiation of the Agreed Framework, and provoked the very thing the US wished to avoid, a nuclear-armed North Korea. Indeed, Bush's adamant decision *not* to engage in direct one-to-one negotiations with Pyongyang (apart from a few encounters which in any case were still within the arena of the Six Party Talks), his insistence on painting the regime as that of a rogue state and refusing to ‘reward’

Pyongyang for what was perceived as bad behaviour appeared to fuel a new kind of security dilemma that can only have been exacerbated by the US policies of regime change evident in Iraq and elsewhere (Pritchard [2007](#); Smith [2006](#)). Added to this was a failure to recognise the shrewd nature of the DPRK leadership, and a continuing tendency to paint the North's leader as irrational and someone with whom dealings were to be avoided (Smith [2000](#)). This tendency to isolate and condemn its designated strategic adversary prevented a fuller understanding of the dynamics involved and the formulation of better policy analysis. In reality, there had not been a serious and prolonged attempt at genuine dialogue and negotiations with North Korea by the Bush administration. As Robert Gallucci noted, 'although we have successfully avoided rewarding North Korea...North Korea has tested a series of ballistic missiles, separated enough plutonium for about eight additional nuclear weapons, and conducted one nuclear test explosion. The Bush administration's policy may be righteous, but it has failed to secure the national interest' (Gallucci [2006](#)). The unfortunate lesson that other would-be proliferators might extract from this episode, and especially if they perceived US intervention or suggestions of regime change, is to negotiate from a position of nuclear strength.

Perhaps the most profound global impact of the resolution of the North Korean nuclear crisis (assuming that the February 2007 agreement is fully honoured) is the stability that it portends for the Korean peninsula, and in turn the positive security benefits that this would bring for international relations more broadly. By all accounts this would represent a rare 'good news' story in international security and will be greeted well both by US administration Korea watchers and by nuclear abolition activists globally. Confirmation that North Korea was making appropriate progress in the dismantling of its facilities emerged during late September 2007. This was followed by a highly acclaimed South–North Summit from 3 to 5 October, in which the South Korean leader made an important and symbolic visit to the North, presaging considerably closer economic and political engagement between the two Koreas (Schoff [2007](#)). Former South Korean President Kim Dae Jung expressed his optimism for the process and for growing peace on the Korean peninsula (KOREA.net [2007](#)). Further proof of this trend was generated when the chief US negotiator, Christopher Hill, made public his view that he was confident that by 2008, the terms of the agreement would have been fulfilled and North Korea denuclearised (GSN [2007](#)).

This is not to say that the agreement is guaranteed to proceed unhindered. The possibility remains that the Pyongyang regime might renege on its commitments, or that critics of the deal in the US might sway the administration to revert to a hardline stance towards the DPRK (Kim [2007](#)). But in terms of how the crisis has played out over the past seven years, there are positive indicators that all sides will recognise the benefits to regional stability in ensuring full compliance. It is also likely that China, with its new-found positive status as a key link between Washington and Pyongyang, will be further encouraged to ensure a steady fulfilment of the process.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown that while the two cases addressed here demonstrate different characteristics when assessing the regional–global nexus of their respective nuclear developments, there are also some generalisations regarding nuclear proliferation that can be derived by cross-comparing the two cases.

The motivations underlying the key actions for each case have been significantly different. In the case of North Korea these have emanated almost exclusively from its fears of threats outside the region, and as a bargaining chip to receive political and material gains. A resolution of the crisis in turn has required strategic reassurance from the perceived source of threat, the United States. Nuclear weapons development and modernisation in South Asia, for its part, is being driven far more by domestic and regional processes than by global developments. Although this does not necessarily obviate global effects, the relatively slow pace of modernisation, the nature of the modernisation and the relative insularity of the region combine to reduce the likelihood that there will be substantial extra-regional effects from these developments.

Precisely because of the potential regional *and* global ramifications of the North Korean nuclear crisis, this particular conflict has received an enormous amount of international attention and energy devoted to a resolution of its potential dangers. The only solution seen here as acceptable to the international community has been disarmament.

The South Asian case, by contrast, is not presented with a direct call for resolution (that is, disarmament) from the same kinds of actors involved in the North Korean case, namely the US and its regional partners. While this

might indicate that these states are resigned to the fact of the India–Pakistan nuclear relationship, this should not, however, be interpreted as a blanket and sanguine acceptance of the status quo in South Asia. Residual fears about a possible heightening of tensions between India and Pakistan – and certainly heightened tensions have occurred with some frequency in the past – require an extra degree of vigilance in this relationship that the absence of a potential nuclear war might not merit. So too does the intensifying political instability within Pakistan itself. Fears have grown that a radical *jihadist* regime may yet come to power there, creating one of the world's worst security nightmares – a failed state led by those who have no respect for the calculus of deterrence or for those norms embedded within the NPT. For those who argue that the elimination of nuclear weapons is a fundamental requirement for international security in general, both at a regional as well as at a global level (see Shultz *et al.* [2007](#)), there will be as much concern about Indian and Pakistani nuclear weapons as there is about North Korean nuclear weapons.

As argued at this chapter's outset, both of these cases have been seen as having posed major challenges to the global non-proliferation regime; the introduction of nuclear weapons into these areas has only served to raise security concerns in the Asian region. It was noted that both have also come to be seen as relatively settled, in the case of South Asia because the nuclear status quo there is not seen as posing a global threat, and in the case of North Korea because of recent disarmament progress. But the fragile and dangerous nature of nuclear diplomacy and deterrence nevertheless warrants the view that – recent improvements notwithstanding – these cases remain of some concern to the international community and still need to be monitored carefully.

In this sense, viable policies directed towards emerging nuclear powers will need to be identified and applied by the world's long-established nuclear states. This must be achieved if the logic and norms underlying the NPT and other existing instruments of nuclear non-proliferation are to remain credible. The knowledge gained from their management of the two cases under review here is that well-tailored adjustments and constraints can be employed to starkly different sets of nuclear dynamics and in ways conducive to avoiding crisis escalation. A finely honed reservoir of strategic patience blends well with a carefully calibrated sequence of policy carrots and sticks to condition those nuclear capabilities that do emerge into the broader international security framework. Both established ‘nuclear haves’ and aspiring nuclear

weapons states will need to work together more tenaciously to realise such an integration. There will also continue to be pressure on the established nuclear weapons states to eliminate their own nuclear arsenals in order to remove the discriminatory nature of the existing nuclear order, whereby the US, Russia, China, Britain and France retain their nuclear arsenals but at the same time seek to deny this capability to others. The challenge thus facing policy elites of both established and emerging nuclear states is to realise that a balance of norm adherence and pragmatic diplomacy is probably the best condition one can achieve in an increasingly complex world of nuclear proliferants. The balance must be robust enough to sustain peace through the successive nuclear crises and tests that will inevitably materialise over the next few decades.

¹ According to Indian press reports, the *Agni I* has also been inducted into service and has undergone its first user trial (*Times of India* [2007](#)).

² All analyses of China's nuclear strategic thought focus on the US as the primary driving force. See, for example, Chase and Medeiros ([2005](#)).

³ Some analysts have noted that Chinese strategists are paying increasing attention to countries such as India and Japan (see Pillsbury [2000](#)).

⁴ India has tested a modified version of the *Prithvi* SRBM as a missile interceptor (Subramanian [2006](#)).

⁵ Although nuclear weapons may have been a tempting strategic option, their use was ruled out by the US in Vietnam, the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, China in Vietnam, France and Britain in Suez, and France in Algeria. The Canberra Commission on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons ([1996](#)) makes this point well.

⁶ The NSAB, composed of academics, strategic analysts and former government officials, was set up as a non-governmental advisory body by the Indian government in the late 1990s.

⁷ This stands in marked contrast to the rejection by the established nuclear weapon states of widespread calls in the UN for greater de-alerting and a move to safer de-alerted force postures (Lederer [2007](#)).

13 Maritime security: regional concerns and global implications

Sam Bateman

Introduction

Maritime security in the Asia-Pacific attracts much attention at present, although many of the concerns are not new. A close relationship exists between regional maritime security and energy security. Increased regional interest in assured access to sources of energy partly explains the greater interest in maritime security. Conflicting claims to sovereignty over offshore islands and competition for offshore resources are a source of tension in Northeast Asia. In Southeast Asia, there are also disputed sovereignty claims. The security of shipping against the threats of piracy and maritime terrorism is of major interest, especially for the Northeast Asian countries, which depend so heavily on the security of the sea lines of communication (SLOCs) from the Middle East through the Indian Ocean to the Malacca and Singapore straits to the South and East China seas, for sustaining their access to energy supplies. Meanwhile, Asia-Pacific naval budgets continue to grow with consequent risks to regional security and the possibility of a 'naval arms race'. This is particularly true in Southeast Asia (Kaneda [2006](#)). Problems loom on the horizon, including increased competition for maritime hegemony between the major regional sea powers – China, Japan and India.

There is a large imbalance between regional oil consumption and production. The Asia-Pacific currently contributes 9.8 per cent of global oil production but consumes 28.9 per cent of total oil production (Wesley [2007](#): 33). The major regional sea powers are also the main regional oil consumers. Maritime security has become an integral part of energy security (Pardesi *et al.* [2006](#): 55). Energy security is certain to be a powerful driver of the regional maritime security environment. The major Asian oil-consuming nations are heavily concerned about the security of shipping delivering their energy supplies. As predicted by Kent Calder ([1996](#): 59), there has been a steady increase in the number of heavily laden supertankers wending their way across the Indian Ocean to East Asia. Seventy-eight per cent of China's oil passes through the straits in the Indian Ocean region where it has no control over the safety and security of SLOCs (You Ji [2007](#): i). The need for

capabilities to ensure the protection of SLOCs has become an important justification for increased naval expenditure, as well as a reason for the Northeast Asian countries to be more closely involved in arrangements for safety, security and environmental protection in the Malacca and Singapore straits.

Regional issues dominate discussion of maritime security in the Asia-Pacific rather than global interests. A fundamental proposition of this chapter is that the nexus between regional and global concerns with maritime security is not strong. Many East Asian countries are reluctant to participate in international initiatives, and resist the direct operational involvement of extra-regional powers in providing maritime security. This is very obvious with measures to enhance the security of shipping in the Malacca strait where Indonesia and Malaysia strongly reject any moves to 'internationalise' the strait (Sondakh [2006](#): 89). The region is also showing a propensity for making claims to maritime jurisdiction and for placing controls over their adjacent waters that are judged to be excessive by the United States and other Western powers (Bateman [2007c](#): 32–3). Potentially, these developments in the region could shape the customary international law of the sea in a way that the Western maritime powers would regard as contrary to their interests.

Regional maritime security concerns are quite distinctive and autonomous. The one exception is the common interest of the international community in the security of shipping and seaborne trade. But even that has distinctive regional features as a consequence of regional maritime geography. The lack of land-based transport infrastructure and the archipelagic nature of the region mean that shipping plays a key role in domestic and intra-regional trade. Much of this is carried in small vessels, some of which are substandard and vulnerable both to natural hazards and pirate attack. These vessels, including small product tankers, are frequently attacked while the larger supertankers carrying crude oil to East Asia gain considerable security from their size and speed, and are not attacked unless they slow down, stop or anchor (Bateman, Raymond and Ho [2006](#): 22). Some regional countries, particularly Indonesia and the Philippines, are also concerned about maritime security because they are major providers of seafarers to the international shipping industry.

This chapter addresses current concerns with maritime security in the Asia-Pacific region and discusses some of the global implications. It identifies common ground and tensions between Asia-Pacific and international security

issues primarily from an empirical perspective. In doing so, it demonstrates how the regional–global nexus is more than just about how systemic forces shape global security through region-specific dynamics. Particular attention is given to energy security which, for reasons discussed later, is closely aligned with maritime security. The prime geographic focus of the chapter is East Asia, including the Andaman Sea and the eastern part of the Bay of Bengal, rather than the Asia-Pacific region more generally. The maritime strategic geography of East Asia makes it one of the most complex geostrategic regions in the world with the chain of narrow seas along the east coast of Asia, the offlying archipelagos and islands, overlapping exclusive economic zones (EEZs), and a proliferation of maritime boundary disputes and conflicting claims to sovereignty over offshore islands and reefs.

Maritime strategic overview

Maritime security in the Asia-Pacific region is high on the agendas of regional forum security forums – both Track One and Track Two. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Forum and the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific have established working groups to discuss maritime security issues, but these forums are vulnerable to principles of non-interference in the domestic affairs of other countries and have a preference for resolving sovereignty disputes on a bilateral basis. These conflicting claims to sovereignty over offshore islands have led to tension, particularly in Northeast Asia, while the situation in the South China Sea with the Spratly and Paracel Islands is currently quiet. A regional institution has yet to emerge that is capable of addressing these and other maritime disputes effectively on a multilateral basis.

The quest for energy security is evident in the strong interest of Northeast Asian countries in the security of shipping passing through the ‘choke points’ of Southeast Asia, and in the competition for offshore oil and gas resources. For geostrategic, technical and economic reasons, pipelines, stockpiling or even canals across the Malay Peninsula are unlikely to lessen the fundamental dependence of the region on shipping for the supply of energy needs. The need for energy security underpins the recent tension between South Korea and Japan over their claims to sovereignty over the Takeshima/Dok-do Islands; China's protests over the allocation by Japan of oil and gas exploration rights in an area of the East China Sea claimed by

China; and the dispute between Indonesia and Malaysia over hydrocarbon rights in the Ambalat area of the Sulawesi Sea. It is also a prime factor in the lingering sovereignty disputes over the Spratly Islands and other features in the South China Sea.

Regional naval spending continues to grow with the acquisition of modern submarines, more capable missile systems and larger surface warships (Minnick [2007](#)). There is a strong correlation between economic growth, regional arms spending and energy demand (Calder [1996](#)). Three of the major regional sea powers, China, India and Russia, attach importance to sea-based nuclear weapons in their maritime strategy and naval planning. In this regard, Donald Berlin ([2006](#): 228) has argued that ‘the advent of more Asian nations equipped with nuclear weapons is an aspect of the general “rise of Asia” that is one of the most significant global phenomena of the 20th and 21st centuries’, and that this eventually will have a maritime dimension. More generally, competitive rather than cooperative maritime strategies are evident with the focus of the larger regional powers on using their maritime security forces to extend their power and influence while lesser powers seek more powerful sea denial capabilities to defend their adjacent waters.

The major regional sea powers – China and India in particular – are competing for Asian maritime dominance. The United States, as the one global sea power, sees India and Japan, implicitly and sometimes explicitly, as key partners in balancing the rise of China. The naval exercises off Guam in April 2007 involving the United States, India and Japan were a very significant development for regional maritime security (Mohan [2007a](#)). ‘New’ threats of piracy and maritime terrorism attract considerable attention, particularly with the security of the Malacca and Singapore straits, but arguably these are being over-stated both for commercial reasons and to justify the strategic presence in these waters of extra-regional powers. More conventional threats and long-standing bilateral tensions remain important in explaining maritime insecurity in the region. These have been resurfacing more frequently, especially in the context of disputed claims to sovereignty over islands or offshore areas. More worryingly, they are a major explanation of increased naval spending in the region.

With maritime security, there is an emerging desire in the region to look after its ‘own backyard’. This is evident in new approaches to regionalism, including the East Asia Summit that shuns the United States (Mydans [2005](#)); the increasing significance attached to the ASEAN+3 (ASEAN plus China,

Japan and South Korea) forum (Stubbs [2002](#): 453–4); the development of the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP); a regional reluctance to participate in cooperative security initiatives put forward by the United States, particularly the Regional Maritime Security Initiative and the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) (Valencia [2005a](#)); and some tardiness with regard to implementation in the region of international measures, such as the 1988 Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Maritime Navigation (SUA Convention) and its 2005 Protocol. While the United States is usually seen as the traditional guarantor of regional maritime security, it has had little impact on the resolution or management of sovereignty disputes in the region.

Changing concepts and developments

Maritime security

The events of 11 September 2001 and perceptions of a terrorist threat to shipping have forced a reappraisal of the concept of maritime security. The concept has a traditional meaning for navies and defence forces with their role of protecting the nation and its national maritime interests against threats primarily of a military nature (Bateman [2007b](#): 105). The concept of maritime security has expanded following 11 September. It is still about protecting national security but instead of overt threats from military forces, some threats of current concern are veiled and perhaps even ‘unthinkable’. This new focus is apparent in the work of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) directed towards making international shipping and seaborne trade more secure against the threat of maritime terrorism. Major measures here are the International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code, as well as the introduction of Automatic Identification Systems, ship alert systems and the development of a global system for the long-range identification and tracking of ships. However, these measures generally apply only to commercial ships above 500 gross tons employed on international voyages; implementation of these measures to the large number of vessels employed on local and domestic trades, as well as to fishing vessels, is problematic. It will be extremely difficult to implement these global measures within the busy seas of East Asia.

At a national level, these developments have brought more agencies into

play with maritime security. While navies see their business as protecting the nation and national interests at sea, most are not responsible for the security of port facilities or ships in port. These activities are the responsibilities of the marine police or coast guard. Similar considerations apply to policing at sea. Just as on land where most countries apply a clear separation between the civil police and the military, a similar distinction exists at sea between the roles of a navy and those of a coast guard. The wider definition of maritime security puts a premium on inter-agency coordination, both at the national and regional levels, and the lack of this coordination is often a barrier to effective maritime security in the region.

‘New’ threats

Piracy and maritime terrorism have become ‘new’ threats to maritime security in the region. While acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships have a long history in Asian waters, particularly in Southeast Asia, international interest in the piracy threat has been much higher in recent years. Several factors explain this. First, the incidence of piracy and armed robbery against ships has led to assessments of higher risks of terrorist attack, and actions to counter piracy are seen as also reducing the risks of terrorist attack (Dragonette [2005](#); Luft and Korin [2004](#)). Second, Northeast Asian countries, particularly China, Japan and South Korea, are highly dependent on energy supplies from the Middle East and have become concerned about the security of tankers carrying these supplies, as well as other shipping, which passes through ‘choke points’ in Southeast Asia. Third, the United States, with its heavy involvement in the Middle East, is concerned about strategic mobility between the Indian and Pacific Oceans with most US Navy ships and submarines in the Middle East and the Indian Ocean being deployed from bases in the Pacific. Fourth, the major regional sea powers, as well as the United States, all have a strategic motivation to establish a presence in Southeast Asia and may use the threats of piracy and terrorism to justify that presence. Finally, there is some evidence of ‘drumming up’ the piracy threat for commercial reasons. Marine insurance and security companies in particular all benefit from ongoing assessments of a high risk of piracy and sea robbery in regional straits and seas.

Whether or not all this increased attention is justified is thus open to question. There has been a marked fall in the number of piracy and sea robbery attacks since 2004, and the types of attack that are carried out are not

those that warrant the interest of non-littoral countries. Most attacks are on vessels in port or at anchor off a port. These attacks are usually of a minor nature and will only be countered by more effective policing by port authorities, and not by international involvement, although some assistance with building the capacity of the port authorities may be useful. Furthermore, attacks on vessels underway are mainly on smaller, more vulnerable vessels in local trades. 'Mainline' container vessels and large tankers on international voyages through the Malacca and Singapore straits between Europe or the Middle East and East Asia are not vulnerable to attack while they are underway (Bateman, Raymond and Ho [2006](#): 22). Yet these are the vessels that are the focus of international interest in, and offers of assistance with, the security of shipping using the straits. The littoral countries are more concerned about navigational safety, environmental protection and smuggling than they are about piracy and the threat of maritime terrorist attack.

The potential for cooperation between pirates and terrorists has probably also been over-stated (Young and Valencia [2003](#)). Piracy and maritime terrorism might involve a similar *modus operandi* by the attackers but a distinction exists between the two acts with piracy being conducted for private ends while terrorism has political motives. In assessments of the risk of maritime terrorism, pirates have been seen as having skills and expertise that might be attractive to a terrorist group, but these are not so specialised that they are not readily available. Former naval personnel and fishermen, as well as the multitude of people throughout Asia that have some experience as commercial seafarers, all offer a basis of knowledge that could be of use to a terrorist group. A distinction must also be drawn between terrorists using piracy and armed robbery against vessels to raise funds and the direct targeting of a ship or port facility as an act of terrorism. Both Gerakan Aceh Merdeka in northern Sumatra and the Abu Sayyaf Group in the southern Philippines have carried out attacks, including kidnappings for ransom, to raise funds.

There have been relatively few confirmed acts of direct maritime terrorism. Passenger ships and ferries have been preferred targets with the sinking of *Superferry 14* in February 2004 near Manila in the Philippines being the most serious act of maritime terrorism so far in terms of loss of life with 116 people killed. Other attacks on ferries in Southeast Asia include the February 2000 bombing of the Philippine ferry *Our Lady Mediatrix*, which killed forty people; and the December 2001 bombing of the Indonesian ferry *Kailifornia*,

which killed ten (Bradford [2005](#): 67). However, the attacks on the USS *Cole* in Aden in October 2000 and on the French tanker *Limburg* off Yemen in 2004 usually attract the most attention in writings on maritime terrorism because they were initiated by al-Qaeda and occurred in the context of 11 September. The numerous maritime terrorist attacks by the ‘Sea Tigers’ of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) on both merchant ships and Sri Lankan warships are also often cited as examples of what might be possible, including the assessment that al-Qaeda has benefited from the technologies and techniques of the LTTE (Gunaratna [2004b](#)).

It is not too difficult to conjure up ‘doomsday’ scenarios for a maritime terrorist attack. A ship carrying a highly dangerous cargo could be hijacked and used as a floating bomb to destroy a port and cause large loss of human life, or a shipping container or a ship itself could be used to import a nuclear bomb or other weapons of mass destruction (WMD) (Richardson [2004](#): 112–33). Due mainly to the difficulties of making such an attack and the lack of certainty as to its outcome, these are very low probability, high consequence scenarios that can lead to some lack of balance in decision-making both by governments and the business sector.

Assessments of the threat of maritime terrorism must be rational and represent a reasonable balance between the likelihood of an attack occurring and the costs of providing adequate security against such an attack. Such threat assessments appear to vary widely between those made at a global level and those made locally. The assessments depend on a multitude of factors, especially the capabilities and intentions of prospective maritime terrorists, the vulnerability of particular targets and the consequences of an attack should one occur. The blocking of a ‘choke point’ by sinking a large ship in a narrow part of the channel is another low credibility scenario although the possibility of terrorists using sea mines to disrupt shipping traffic is more credible (Bateman [2006b](#): 37–8).

Proliferation Security Initiative

The United States has encountered problems in the region, particularly in East Asia, with implementing the PSI and its procedures for intercepting vessels at sea suspected of carrying WMD or related materials (Valencia [2005a](#), [2005b](#)). The PSI involves a set of principles identifying practical steps to interdict shipments of WMD flowing to and from state or non-state actors ‘of proliferation concern’. It includes new international agreements that allow

the United States and its allies to board and search ships suspected of carrying WMD or associated materials. Ship-boarding agreements have been signed between the United States and Liberia, Panama, Cyprus, the Marshall Islands, Croatia and Belize that permit the boarding of ships flying the flag of those countries. Similar agreements are being sought with other major flag states. These are premised on the principle that boarding requires the consent of the flag state of the suspect vessel.

Many countries have signalled their support for the initiative. However, it is sometimes difficult to assess whether or not a country is actually a member of the PSI. The US State Department website speaks of countries 'endorsing the principles of PSI' but this is not necessarily membership. Only two Asian countries (Japan and Singapore) are full members of the PSI and Asian countries that are key to the successful implementation of the initiative, notably China, India, Indonesia and South Korea, have deferred active involvement despite pressure from the United States (Valencia [2005b](#)). While Japan sought to encourage neighbouring Asian countries, as much as possible, to participate in a PSI maritime interdiction exercise held off Tokyo Bay in late October 2004, neither China nor South Korea accepted this invitation. Similarly, in May 2006, China and South Korea withdrew from a Japanese-sponsored exercise when it became apparent that the exercise was related to the PSI. Malaysia and Indonesia have been opposed to the operational implementation of the PSI in waters under their national jurisdiction.

ReCAAP

ReCAAP was an initiative of Japan established through meetings of the Heads of Asian Coast Guard Agencies. It is the most significant recent development for piracy prevention in the region. All ASEAN nations, along with Japan, China, Korea, India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, are working under ReCAAP to set up an information network and a cooperation regime to prevent piracy and armed robbery against ships in regional waters. It is a very significant achievement that provides for the establishment of an Information Sharing Centre (ISC) to be located in Singapore. Good progress is being made by the ISC, and sufficient ratifications were received to allow ReCAAP to enter into force on 4 September 2006 and for the ISC to commence its work. However, Malaysia and Indonesia remain outside the agreement (Hand [2006](#)), and it is by no means certain that non-Asian countries will be invited

to join the agreement.

Regional concerns

Naval developments

Two major trends are evident with maritime strategy in the region (Bateman [2006c](#): 247–8). The first is economic and political, and the second military and operational. The first involves a classical Mahanian approach with naval forces being used to extend regional strategic influence. The major powers of Russia, India, China and Japan, as well as the United States, demonstrate this approach. It includes perceptions of an increased need to protect shipping, possibly in waters well away from home, and is most apparent in the waters of Southeast Asia with frequent ship visits by extra-regional navies and naval exercises that may even be ‘dressed up’ as joint patrols. However, these are largely for show and achieve little in terms of direct maritime security. While navies are usually associated with a diplomatic role, the ‘soft power’ of coast guards is also utilised in this way in the region, particularly by the Japan Coast Guard, as a means of promoting cooperation and strategic influence.

The second trend relates to the increased operational significance of littoral areas. Major Western navies are focusing on littoral operations and expeditionary forces while coastal states, especially in the region, are concerned to protect their sovereignty and defend their own littoral. The former navies require capabilities for power projection and to operate freely in littoral areas of the world, while the latter navies require sea denial capabilities to deny that freedom, such as submarines, anti-ship missiles and small attack craft. Expeditionary forces and power projection capabilities, including large amphibious ships, land attack cruise missiles and versatile surface combatants are not just the monopoly of the US Navy. Germany, Italy and Spain are following this approach, as well as the major European navies of Britain and France. There is a strong contrast between this strategy and those of regional navies more focused on sea denial.

This contrast in strategic approaches between competitive and cooperative maritime strategies has other consequences. It is evident, for example, in an apparently increased interest in the region in military oceanographic research and intelligence collection. The extent, variety and sophistication of signals intelligence operations in East Asia have increased significantly over the last decade (Ball [2004](#)). Aircraft, surface ships and submarines conduct these

operations. Good oceanographic knowledge is an important ‘force multiplier’ in maritime operations, most particularly for submarine operations, anti-submarine warfare and mine warfare. While oceanographic surveying in an EEZ is subject to the jurisdiction of the coastal state, the United States and other maritime powers argue that hydrographic surveying and research activities conducted for military purposes are not (Bateman [2005](#): 165).

Military surveying and intelligence collection activities in the region may become more controversial and dangerous in the future. Most of these activities are conducted in the EEZ of one coastal state or another. Some regional countries have declared security zones that extend into the EEZ, or have specifically claimed that other states are not authorised to conduct military exercises or manoeuvres in the EEZ without their consent. As a result of concern over the US ‘spy plane’ incident off Hainan in 2001 and incidents involving US ‘military survey’ ships operating in its EEZ, China enacted legislation in 2002 restricting surveying and intelligence collection activities in its EEZ (Gertz [2003](#)). Concern about the possible serious consequences of incidents of this nature led a group of maritime policy and legal specialists in the region to develop a set of guidelines for navigation and overflight in the EEZ of another country (EEZ Group 21 [2005](#)).

The proliferation of submarines in the region, including their use as launching platforms for nuclear weapons, is of particular concern. With regional navies, the US Navy, the Australian Navy and possibly the Indian Navy, all operating submarines in the East Asian seas, these waters will become ‘crowded’ in the future (Bateman [2007a](#)). It is timely to consider the implications of these developments, including what might be done to reduce the risk of incidents with ‘intruder’ submarines such as those periodically experienced in European waters during the Cold War. However, surveillance and intelligence collection are major roles for submarines and submarine issues are extremely sensitive.

The growth of regional coast guards is another important maritime strategic development (Bateman [2006d](#)). Coast guards are now more significant in the region and make a major contribution to maritime security cooperation. Existing coast guards are being expanded and some countries (such as Vietnam, Indonesia and Malaysia) that had not previously had coast guards have either established or are in the process of establishing them. Coast guard units are more suitable than warships for employment in sensitive areas where there are conflicting claims to maritime jurisdiction

and/or political tensions between parties. In such situations, the arrest of a foreign vessel by a warship may be highly provocative whereas arrest by a coast guard vessel may be accepted as legitimate law enforcement.

The United States, which has always used the US Navy as its main vehicle for regional maritime cooperation, is now recognising the sensitivities involved and making greater use of the US Coast Guard. Significantly, the United States has dropped its catchy title of the '1,000 ship navy' in favour of the Global Maritime Partnership Initiative (GMPI) for its programme of global maritime security cooperation, largely because many of the tasks that might have been undertaken by the 1,000 ship navy are in fact undertaken by coast guards and other maritime security forces. This is particularly the case in East Asia (Bateman [2006d](#)).

Energy security: future maritime scenarios

The imbalance between the consumption of energy and its production in the Asia-Pacific has widened considerably over the past decade (Pardesi *et al.* [2006](#): 15). This is a consequence of both increased energy demand to feed the fastest-growing economies in the world and a decline in domestic sources of supply. Overall, the Middle East supplies about 75 per cent of Asia's imported energy, and a very large proportion of this is carried by sea through the 'choke points' between the Indian and Pacific Oceans (Richardson [2007](#): 7). The major regional powers, China, India and Japan, are all critically affected by this energy imbalance and there is a question mark as to whether they will react as competitors or leaders in seeking a cooperative regional approach to energy security. The power plays between these major states, including over energy and maritime security, will be a key factor in future regional security more generally (Wesley [2007](#): 43).

The major maritime security dimensions of energy security lie both in the increased dependence of regional countries on shipping and SLOCs for energy supplies and in the growing competition for offshore oil and gas resources. While Southeast Asia is relatively oil and gas rich, this situation may change with Indonesia already losing self-sufficiency. Northeast Asian countries are desperately searching for energy security and there will be implications that spill over into Southeast Asia, particularly with the security of SLOCs and the exploration and exploitation of offshore oil and gas in the South China Sea and potentially also in the Andaman Sea where reserves are being discovered. Mark Valencia ([2007](#): 25) has claimed that due to several

major sovereignty disputes in Northeast Asia, 'maritime Northeast Asia has become an increasingly dangerous milieu where confidence and trust are sorely needed'. Again the quest for offshore oil and gas is the driving force behind this situation.

The threat by Osama bin Laden to attack economic targets in the West, especially oil supplies, has led to claims that tankers moving through the Malacca strait are at risk of terrorist attack (Luft and Korin [2004](#): 64). However, it would be extremely difficult to block the strait completely (Bateman [2006b](#)), and the sinking of a single tanker would not have any great economic impact. Generally, the risks of major economic disruption to the region as a consequence of a terrorist attack on a tanker in the Malacca and Singapore straits are over-stated, particularly in assessments that originate from outside the region. Nevertheless, concern about the vulnerability of ships in narrow and congested waterways has led to the search for alternative methods of supply, including pipelines from Central Asia and a prospective pipeline across the Malay Peninsula. The latter pipeline would help alleviate possible future congestion in the Malacca and Singapore straits and would cost an estimated US\$7 billion (Yunus [2007](#)).

Looking to the future, while the quest for energy security has potential to generate competition between regional countries, it might also generate more cooperative frameworks. The Second East Asia Summit held in Cebu in January 2007 led to the signing of the Cebu Declaration on East Asian Energy Security that brought together measures for energy efficiency and conservation, as well as for the development of bio-fuels (Australian DFAT [2007](#)). Japan also announced plans at this forum to support energy conservation in East Asia, including US\$2 billion in official assistance for power plants and other measures, and to accept trainees from the region for training in energy efficiency and conservation (*Asahi Shimbun* [2007](#)). Regional cooperative measures are also being considered in Southeast Asia, including the Greater Mekong subregion economic cooperation and development, the ASEAN Power Grid and the Trans-ASEAN Gas Pipeline (Chang [2007](#)).

The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum has also been active in developing regional energy security and responses to the threat of maritime terrorism. The Secure Trade in the Asia-Pacific Region initiative developed by APEC provides for a range of measures both to protect trade in the region against the threat of terrorism and for energy security including the

security of SLOCs. The Sydney Declaration resulting from the September 2007 APEC meetings in Sydney draws explicit links between energy security, global warming and the Asia-Pacific's capacity for continued development and economic growth (Wesley [2007](#): 34).

Maritime security regimes

UNCLOS

The 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) provides the framework for global and regional maritime security, but there are other maritime regimes for shipping, fishing, seabed mining, marine environmental protection, sea dumping, the prevention of ship-sourced pollution, search and rescue, and so on. Apart from UNCLOS, the main regimes for maritime security are those provided by the IMO, particularly the ISPS Code, other amendments to the 1974 International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), the SUA Convention and its Protocols; and for maritime safety through both SOLAS and the 1979 International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue (SAR). However, these regimes are not necessarily well supported in the region.

UNCLOS provides an agreed legal basis for enclosure of a significant proportion of the 'global commons' of the previous areas of the high seas by extending the areas that can be claimed as territorial seas and continental shelves and leading to the establishment of 200 nautical mile EEZs. Thus the Convention actually supports *nationalistic* approaches to managing the maritime domain, although on the other hand, it also provides strong support for the need for cooperation between states. This conceptual dichotomy is very apparent in the seas of East Asia. It bears quite fundamentally on the prospects for maritime cooperation and regime-building in these seas.

UNCLOS has some serious limitations as the foundation for a regional maritime security regime (Bateman [2007c](#)). In part these are a consequence of the relatively complex maritime geography of the region with its numerous islands, archipelagos and narrow shipping channels. However, the limitations also flow from the complexity of UNCLOS itself, its numerous 'built in' ambiguities, and the pace of development of the law of the sea. These factors reflect generalised global considerations rather than the peculiarities and requirements of particular regions of the world, and with Europe in the lead on environmental issues in particular, there is a trend for aspects of the

international law of the sea to be interpreted in a regional context (Bateman [2006a](#): 385). But regional countries exhibit many varying perspectives of key areas of the law of the sea, including navigational regimes, the use of territorial sea straight baselines and rights and duties in the EEZ.

It is a major limitation of UNCLOS that the United States remains outside the Convention. The main problem the United States had initially with ratification was the attitude of the powerful mining lobby in the United States to Part XI of UNCLOS dealing with deep seabed mining. However, the concern has now shifted to the security environment with perceptions that ratification of UNCLOS could inhibit maritime operations by the US Navy. An article in the US Navy's main professional journal *Proceedings* argued that UNCLOS is defective on national security, sovereignty, economic and judicial grounds (Gaffney [2005](#)). On 15 May 2007, President George W. Bush made a statement urging that the Senate act favourably on US accession during the first session of the 110th US Congress (Lobe [2007](#)). The matter remains controversial in the United States with an active debate between supporters of US ratification and those who oppose this step (Eagleburger and Moore [2007](#); Savage [2007](#)).

The arguments against US ratification tend to be more political than legal. UNCLOS is seen as a manifestation of the 1970s driven by the majority power of the newly independent states and the concept of the New International Economic Order (Rabkin [2007a](#), [2007b](#)). Despite the long-standing support for ratification from the US Navy, a former commander of US Pacific Fleet and Deputy Chief of Naval Operations has claimed that such a step would surrender US national sovereignty to a supranational organisation and forfeit America's access to the freedom of the seas (Lyons [2007](#)). More specific arguments suggest that the United States could run into legal challenges with, for example, implementing the PSI, warship transits through the territorial sea or conducting military surveys in the EEZ of another state. The safeguard in UNCLOS which allows the exclusion of 'military activities' from compulsory international arbitration is regarded as weak due to the lack of definition of what constitutes a 'military activity' and the unpredictability of the main arbitral forum for law of the sea disputes, the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea.

Bernard Oxman, a senior US authority on the law of the sea, has been quoted as saying, 'If the law of the sea is left to drift, it will drift in the direction of increasing coastal state restrictions on global freedoms' (Peterson

[2007](#): 1). Or more simply, the excessive claims of today may become the customary law of tomorrow. US ratification would allow the United States to have a greater say in the evolution of the law of the sea. The United States is currently pushing measures such as PSI, GMPI and Global Maritime Situational Awareness to promote global maritime security. In part, at least, these initiatives are aimed at guaranteeing global maritime energy security (Wesley [2007](#): 39). In a recent submission to the US Senate Committee on Foreign Relations Hearing on the Law of the Sea Convention, the Vice Chief of Naval Operations stated that joining UNCLOS was critical to the success of these initiatives (Walsh [2007](#)).

Other agreements

There are about a dozen international conventions dealing with the threat of terrorism, but only the SUA Convention and its Protocol relate to terrorism at sea. An IMO Diplomatic Conference in October 2005 adopted new protocols to the SUA Convention and its related Protocol on Fixed Platforms. These provide an international treaty framework for combating and prosecuting individuals who use a ship as a weapon or means of committing a terrorist attack, or transport by ship terrorists or cargo intended for use in connection with WMD programmes. A mechanism is also provided to facilitate the boarding in international waters of vessels suspected of engaging in these activities. There is thus a link between the 2005 Protocol and the PSI. The expanded provisions of the SUA Convention through the introduction of the 2005 Protocol are unlikely to make the Convention any more attractive to those countries which so far have chosen not to ratify it.

There is some lack of support among regional countries for important regional agreements related to maritime security. Cambodia, North Korea, Thailand and the United States are not parties to UNCLOS and only about half of member countries are party to the SAR Convention. The 1979 SAR Convention encourages cooperation between state parties and SAR organisations around the world with regard to search and rescue operations at sea. The apparent lack of support for this Convention in the region might be due to the lack of capacity of some countries to meet their obligations under the Convention, and to concerns about extra-territorial aspects of the Convention. The SUA Convention and its protocols have also not been ratified by all regional countries.

Global ramifications

Considerations

While regional factors tend to dominate discussion of both maritime security and energy security, there are still global ramifications of regional concerns with maritime security. These result from several considerations. First, there is the greater concern for the security of shipping and seaborne trade that is evident throughout the world and which has been heightened by fears that terrorists could use a ship or the international maritime transportation system for terrorist purposes. This concern is an international phenomenon brought about by globalisation, growing concern for energy security, increased economic interdependence and the fact that seaborne trade throughout recent decades has grown at a faster rate than the world economy. Seaborne trade is particularly important in East Asia as that region lacks a well-developed land transport infrastructure. However, as has been noted, the region does not always share global concerns about the threat of maritime terrorism.

Second, there is the potential clash of maritime strategies in the region that tend to be more competitive than cooperative. This includes the moves by China, Japan, India and Russia to use their navies and coast guards to extend their regional influence, and the no longer remote possibility of European navies becoming involved in the region in the future if their current strategies are taken at face value. The latter navies are focused on littoral operations and expeditionary forces, while regional navies are developing more powerful sea denial capabilities to defend their littoral. The possibility that these strategic cultures could clash at some time in the future is not entirely fanciful.

Regional naval developments can no longer be assessed purely in the context of the region itself. This is not just a matter of terrorism being a global threat but also flows from the nature of world trade and the international arms industry with European and North American companies competing aggressively for the Asian naval market. Current levels of naval spending in the region have the potential to add to regional maritime insecurity. The 'winners' in the current situation are the naval shipbuilders and manufacturers of naval weapon systems mainly in Europe and North America, while the region itself might be the 'loser'. If the numbers and size of defence and naval equipment exhibitions in the region are any guide, the exhibitors, largely from outside the region, are clearly excited about their potential regional markets.

Third, there is a lack of acceptance in the region of key international maritime security regimes. This is partly a consequence of the belief that the costs of regime participation, particularly in terms of some loss of sovereignty and independence, will exceed the benefits. This includes acceptance, or otherwise, of key law of the sea regimes for which UNCLOS provides the basic framework. In many ways, the East Asian seas are now the global focus of law of the sea disputes. All the critical issues in terms of resolving ambiguities in the law of the sea, and the different points of view on particular jurisdictional issues and the freedoms of navigation and overflight, may be found in these seas. Tensions between regional practice with the law of the sea and the global law of the sea, as set out in UNCLOS, may become more evident in the future (Bateman [2006a](#): 385).

A regional–global nexus?

A regional–global nexus is less apparent with maritime security than with other security concerns. Compatibilities are evident with the effects of globalisation and the common interest in the safety and security of shipping. However, tensions between international and regional outlooks are more apparent from both theoretical and empirical perspectives. Most maritime security regimes are developed at the global level and may not be sensitive to regional nuances and circumstances. Nations can sign up for global programmes of action but then have little capacity for, or intention of implementing, such programmes at the national level. These programmes are rather like motherhood. They are worthy of support and praiseworthy in a general sense but sometimes unwanted and difficult for the individual. Most barriers to effective international solutions are encountered at the national and regional levels where countries have other national priorities, and bilateral tensions can exist between neighbouring countries. This is as much the case with maritime security as it is with other areas of global endeavour.

While there is international concern about maritime security in the region, there is no agreement between regional and extra-regional countries about how a greater level of maritime security might be achieved. This is largely due to some lack of agreement on common interests, regional resistance to outside interference and no accepted regional political forum where relevant actions can be identified and agreed. With maritime security, and for the reasons discussed in this chapter, this is more likely to be an Asian forum rather than an Asia-Pacific one.

Conclusions

The maritime security scene in East Asia is currently a complex mix of old and new challenges with increased concern for energy security as a significant new factor. The old challenges are associated with lingering bilateral tensions, conflicting claims to sovereignty over offshore islands and reefs, and continuing problems of the Taiwan strait and the Korean peninsula. These are exacerbated by increased resource scarcities with the high dependency of Northeast Asian countries, in particular, on imported energy, and the serious depletion of regional fish stocks. As well as the quest for energy security, the new challenges come mainly from piracy and the threat of maritime terrorism, but there are also other problems of law and order at sea, including drug trafficking and illegal population movements, and serious dilemmas with protecting and preserving the marine environment and conserving its resources. Both sets of challenges are specific to the region and limit the applicability of a regional–global nexus with maritime security.

There is much competition between major players for influence and the forging of relationships with other regional countries. China feels that the United States, India and Japan are working towards its maritime strategic containment; India believes China is trying to encircle it and establish a maritime strategic presence in the Indian Ocean; and Japan fears the strategic rise of China. As has been noted, energy security will play an increasing role in the power plays between the region's major powers. All of this competition has a very significant maritime dimension that gives little prospect of stability and certainty in the regional maritime security scene in the foreseeable future. Understandably, the lesser maritime powers of the region are concerned about how this major power competition works out. The maritime security of the region will, like regional security more generally, be largely determined by the region itself.

Despite the efforts by the United States with the GMPI, there is no overarching global maritime strategic dynamic. Global initiatives such as PSI and the SUA Convention are problematic in the region. There is a strong contrast between the strategies of regional navies and those of the major Western powers. With regional maritime security, the region is starting to establish some of its own norms and principles, including the management of energy security. This is particularly the case with law of the sea regimes with the widespread use of straight territorial sea baselines and implementation of a

‘burden sharing’ regime for safety and environmental protection in the Malacca and Singapore straits.

As the focus of global maritime power shifts towards Asia (Ho [2004](#)), Asia will increasingly help shape the international order for maritime security. It is evident that the power and influence of regional countries will shape global maritime security in a more direct manner than simply through the interplay of region-specific dynamics. This is evident in the regional need for energy security, the rise of regional navies, and their evolving maritime strategies and regional positions on law of the sea issues that are in sharp contrast to those of the major Western maritime powers that have hitherto ‘called the shots’ on these issues.

The challenge now is to build a regional maritime security environment in which countries are more prepared to cooperate and reduce their naval spending and levels of naval activity. This might be an idealistic dream. However, rather than the current levels of self-interest and countries seeking relative gains in the balance of power between states, we need to be concerned that our regional responses serve to promote the common good and absolute gains where all might benefit. Many writers, including this author, share the idealistic view when it comes to the maritime domain, and hope that maritime confidence-building and cooperation may build a more stable, regional maritime regime than exists at present. Cooperation is fundamental to managing maritime security in all its dimensions. A cooperative approach to energy security in the region will help in this regard.

14 Thinking globally and acting regionally: securitising energy and environment

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In evaluating issues within the so-called ‘new agenda’ in security studies, it is tempting to offer prescriptions addressing problems that affect world politics at the transnational and global levels of analysis. This is particularly the case for environmental issues, which have become progressively securitised within the discourse on international relations (Homer-Dixon [2001](#)). To resolve environmental dangers such as resource depletion, energy security and anthropogenic climate change, much of the prevailing wisdom favours recourse to global civil society and global institutions (Barton *et al.* [2004](#)). An under-appreciated fact here is that regional dynamics can affect outlooks towards global solutions perceived as the best way to address environmental problems in a variety of ways. On the one hand, excessive reliance on regionalism can make this task problematic. Conversely, however, regional solutions have in fact often proven far more appropriate than an exclusive reliance on global norms and laws, not to mention a weak global civil society that is still in its infancy.

In this chapter I explore this regional–global *problématique* in international environmental governance, with specific reference to the Asia-Pacific. I do so briefly in relation to various multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), and more expansively in relation to the regulation of trade in hazardous waste. I then conclude by examining in some detail the regional differences between Europe and the Asia-Pacific on the climate change issue, outlining the way in which the Eurocentric nature of the Kyoto Protocol contributed to its failure as a basis for developing effective responses to the issue. This explains why initiatives in the region such as the Asia-Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate (APP) and the Sydney Declaration endorsed at the 2007 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) meeting represent important building blocks in the construction of a more effective post-Kyoto climate regime. It also suggests that regional differences are crucial to an understanding of both the limitations of existing attempts to address global problems and the possibilities for future improvements.

From regional to global approaches: trading MEA effectiveness for

consensus?

The negotiation of MEAs, perhaps unexpectedly, draws attention to the interplay between the 'regional' and the 'global'. Despite the international scope of rhetoric that pervades much of the discourse on environmental politics, many issues are transboundary or regional in both cause and effect, rather than global in nature. In addition, there are regionally differentiated perspectives that make the negotiation of international agreements difficult, when regional approaches can be both more effective and serve as the basis for building towards global consensus. To complicate matters still further, pressures to find solutions to problems such as climate change and energy security have the potential to heighten disputes over maritime boundaries and disputes over international water resources *within* regions.

While it is tempting to appeal to global environmental norms, it is not clear that such norms are shared by all regions, either in absolute or relative terms, sufficiently to produce effective global environmental consensus. Indeed, there is ample evidence that the global level is highly problematic, and that there is merit in broader application of the 'subsidiarity principle' developed in the context of the European Union (EU), according to which problems should be addressed at the lowest level possible. For example, surveying numerous MEAs, David Vogel ([1997](#): 567) has concluded that the most effective seem to be those that are regional in geographical scope and limited in ambition with regard to subject matter:

Many of the most effective agreements are regional. They address specific, highly visible and commonly acknowledged problems of cross-border pollution, usually air or water, involve a limited number of countries, impose costs on only a relatively few industries and primarily affect countries with substantial financial resources and administrative capacity.

Vogel sees the Montreal Protocol, the Vienna Convention on the Long Range Transport of Air Pollution, the Marpol (London) Convention and the various regional seas agreements (Oslo, Paris, Helsinki and Paris Commissions, Mediterranean Action Plan) as being the most effective, and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), the International Tropical Timber Agreement, the Bonn Convention on Migratory Species and the Rio Convention on Biological Diversity as being

less successful.

Adding states parties and issues can be seen to make any multilateral negotiations more complex (and therefore more difficult), and make it more likely that the cost of consensus will be lowest common denominator approaches that will undermine effectiveness. So it is also likely that adding parties to a regime that contributes little to the causes or solutions of problems simply adds counterproductive complexity to the politics through which MEAs must be negotiated. This is most obvious with the International Whaling Convention. Sponsorship of non-whaling states to membership by the US in an attempt to convert a conservation regime into a preservation regime has been countered by a similar response by Japan, with the result that vote-buying is now rife and the regime is in danger of collapse (see Mitchell [1998](#)).

Moreover, the nature of environmental issues can vary from one region to the next, leaving open the possibility that attempts to derive global, rather than regional, responses might give rise to conflict. The regional perspective of Europe, for example, might be at odds with that of Asia. This could arise not just from various interests, but from the different perspectives of principled issue networks of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) forming on any issue. Overwhelmingly, NGOs on environmental issues originate in Europe and North America (the 'North'), and thus inevitably reflect Northern perspectives, values and priorities. Understandably, they are often viewed with suspicion in the South.

Indeed, Deepak Lal ([1995](#)) responded to Samuel Huntington's 'clash of civilisations' thesis by suggesting that an equally deep gulf existed between environmentalists in the 'North' who sought to impose their values on the 'South', thus limiting their future development prospects. These tensions are putatively mediated within the discourse of 'sustainable development', but this mediation depends crucially upon the structuring of MEAs so as to provide – at a minimum – 'double standards' exemptions for the South, or (preferably) transfers of wealth or technology in the name of capacity-building and technology transfer.

The consent of the South to such measures has almost without exception been the price of agreement. The Asia-Pacific region is complex in this regard, containing developing and developed nations (such as OECD members Japan, Korea and Australia, and those such as Thailand and Singapore that could be strong candidates for membership). While this fact

has the potential to divide the region, it also makes it an interesting 'laboratory' in which promising approaches might be developed for possible subsequent export to the global level.

North, South, East and West: regional complexities of the Asia-Pacific

The Asia-Pacific region stands at the crossroads of many points of difference on environmental priorities. The preferences of states in the global North (also referred to confusingly as the 'West') are often at variance with those in Asia, which itself contains both wealthy states linked to Europe and North America, as well as developing nations with different agendas and priorities. This makes for an especially problematic relationship between largely North-based NGOs that address environmental concerns and the states and peoples of the Asian region.

One incident underscored this difference in dramatic fashion. In August 2007, Greenpeace dumped eleven tonnes of papaya outside the agriculture ministry in Bangkok as a protest against a pending government decision to lift a ban on open-field trials of genetically modified (GM) papaya. The protest fell rather flat, however, when 'Passers-by took matters, and tonnes of papayas dumped by Greenpeace, into their own hands, and ran off.' This clash of risk evaluations was summed up by Ubon Ratchatani villager Ampon Tantima, aged thirty-one, who stated (before rushing back to his car with the free fruit): 'I'm not scared of GM papayas. Rather, I'm scared I won't have any to eat' (*Bangkok Post*, 28 August 2007).

As this example suggests, the relationship between North and South, East and West on environmental issues is often fraught with tension, particularly when multinational corporations are often cast as exploiting not just citizens and workers, but the environment as well. The 1984 tragedy at the Union Carbide plant at Bhopal in India illustrated the problems for multinationals in international environmental politics, because states are willing to use a North-South discourse to their own advantage.

While the reputation of Union Carbide certainly suffered, Bhopal was also used as a stick to beat multinationals everywhere. Yet it is by no means clear what the company's precise responsibility for the incident was. The Indian Central Bureau of Investigation prevented Union Carbide from having access to the plant, records and employees for over a year. The government became a plaintiff in civil action against the company, and 'of necessity fostered a

version of the facts that supported its own litigation interest' (Wyburd [1993: 208](#)). When the company was eventually permitted to investigate, they concluded that the exceptional entry of a large amount of water into a tank of methyl isocyanate had caused the incident, and they believed this was an act of sabotage by a disgruntled employee. The impact of the accident was exacerbated by poor local governance, because housing had been permitted in the area around the plant that had been intended as a buffer zone against just such an eventuality.

Could the company alone have prevented such a disaster? Should the plant design have made it impossible? Should Union Carbide have had managers from corporate headquarters on the spot? Certainly, the incident was taken by many as an act of corporate irresponsibility, and a reason for some why such dangerous chemicals should not be manufactured in the developing regions. Even so, India would either have to manufacture or import them, and it had decided to permit manufacture. But it had done so under conditions which limited the employment of expatriates and required substantial (49.1 per cent) local equity. Further, substantial new housing development had been permitted near the plant after it had been built – something the company could not control (Shrivastava [1995](#)). Similar policies relating to requirements for local equity (together with poor protection for intellectual property rights) limited foreign investment by firms, and thus the technology transfer promised by governments under the Montreal Protocol, suggesting that we need to be careful in how we think of policy problems and solutions in regional and global contexts.

Not only global campaigns, but global agreements play out differently in the Asia-Pacific region, thanks in part to the 'double standards' provisions that are included in MEAs. These represent the price of securing agreement in developing countries – and the fact that (unlike Europe) the Asia-Pacific region contains both developing and developed economies. In 2003, a member of the Yamaguchi-gumi affiliated crime organisation in Japan was arrested on suspicion of smuggling about 60,000 metal cylinders, each containing 250 grams of chlorofluorocarbon (CFC)-12 (sold for use in automobile air conditioners), from Tsingtao in China, and making profits of about 100 million yen (*Yomiuri Shimbun* [2004](#)). Two traders were also arrested as accomplices. According to the police, the cylinders cost 100 yen each in China, but were sold for 1,900 yen each to garages in Hokkaido, Kanagawa, Okayama and other prefectures, and on-sold to consumers for

about 3,000 yen each.

CFCs were used in car air conditioners and other cooling equipment, but advanced nations, including Japan, stopped production in 1995 and started limiting imports, based on the 1987 Montreal Protocol. Under that agreement, developing nations were permitted to produce CFCs until the end of 2009. CFC substitutes were available, but for cars produced before 1995, parts of air conditioners (or the air conditioners themselves) had to be modified to use the substitute. The cost of changing the system was up to 100,000 yen, so black-market CFCs were an attractive option, providing an opportunity for the Yakuza.

As this example shows, the presence of developed nations in the region makes for a more complex set of interactions than a simple 'North-South' discourse would imply, despite (as Bhopal suggests) the temptations for states to employ this discourse to their advantage. This was certainly the case with the issue of trade over hazardous waste, where moves by Europe to prohibit global trade in waste for recovery and recycling from developed to developing countries ran up against a markedly different set of norms and interests in the Asia-Pacific region.

There are obvious differences between Europe and Asia on other environmental issues, such as CITES, where trade in threatened species for traditional medicines makes enforcement of the provisions of the Convention much more difficult than it is in Europe. Whaling and deforestation also play out differently in the region, with the latter exemplified by Malaysian logging companies playing the role of transnational 'exploiters' in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands. But the trade in waste and its regulation provides a particular contrast between North and South, with different interests also dividing the region. It thus warrants more detailed examination.

Hazardous waste and recycling bans: trade differentiation in Asia and Europe

The international trade in hazardous waste is regulated principally by the Basel Convention. It is of interest in a discussion of the interaction between the 'regional' and the 'global' because regional approaches formed components of the international regime. This is not just for the waste trade within Europe, but also in the Bamako Convention in Africa and the Waigani Convention for the South Pacific, which banned the importation of hazardous

and radioactive wastes into the region and controlled movements of hazardous wastes within the region.

While the Basel Convention signalled a global approach to waste trade regulation, the issue is one with differential regional impacts (Kellow [1999](#)). Regional approaches to such problems in turn can have global ramifications. Policies encouraging recycling can lead to considerable instability in international markets by increasing supply without also increasing demand. For this reason, subsidies for recycling have often been favoured, but this disrupts the market for materials gathered by scavenging in developing countries, and thus deprives some of the world's poorest people of their livelihood. For example, the introduction of a German packaging law in the 1990s produced such an over-supply that waste collectors were paying paper manufacturers to take waste back. The glut of German paper flooded the French and British markets, resulting in lower levels of recycling in those countries, and in the waste being sent to Indonesia. It also (together with the Asian financial collapse in 1997) jeopardised paper recycling programmes in Australia, which depended on exports to Asia for their viability.

NGOs based in the North can run campaigns which make little sense in the Asia-Pacific region. Environmental groups regard the recycling of discarded electronic equipment, including printed circuitry, as a significant problem. Greenpeace ran an international campaign against an Australian company exporting such waste to the Philippines in an attempt to support a ban on trade in waste for recycling under the Basel Convention, describing the export of Australian computer scrap as 'toxic colonialism' and arguing that Australia was 'the world's number one toxic criminal' (Kellow [1999](#): 122). Yet the nature of this trade highlighted the fact that this was a substantially more complex situation than could be captured by a discourse of 'colonialism'. The trade in computer scrap to the Philippines was being conducted by Hightechnology Metal Recyclers Pty Ltd, which purchased obsolete electrical and electronic equipment and extracted from it base metals and components (Thompson Environmental Services [1995](#): 6). The obsolete equipment was shipped to the Philippines, where a subsidiary company, Computer Recyclers (Aust) Phils Inc., used manual labour to recover computer parts such as diodes, switches, heat sinks and capacitors, which were exported for re-use in Australia, the US, Vietnam and China. Clean copper, aluminium, brass and stainless steel were sorted and exported to buyers in the same countries, while ferrous steel scrap was sold to local

buyers. Plastic scrap was exported to Malaysia and China, whereas printed circuit boards and other items requiring pyrometallurgical or hydrometallurgical recovery were sent to Australia, where gold, silver and copper were recovered. Ultimately, then, the most hazardous part of this recycling operation was conducted in Australia.

This case demonstrates the comparative advantage in the supply of labour for the recycling operation which the Philippines enjoyed and the gains from trade from an economic as well as an environmental perspective. If the recycling operation could not take advantage of cheap labour costs for disassembly, less metal would be recovered from used computers. This would result in more being disposed of in dumps. Fewer jobs for Philippines workers would have been sustained, not to mention other fruits of economic activity.

There have been marked differences between Europe and the Asia-Pacific on this issue. A ban on trade from OECD to non-OECD countries for recycling within the context of the Basel Convention was pushed by European states in the name of protecting developing countries from the effects of hazardous waste. It also could be seen in the South, however, as an attempt to protect the recycling industry in the North. For example, computer scrap has been recycled at a plant in Canada for twenty-five years. More than 100,000 tonnes were recycled in 1993, yielding metal valued at over C\$200 million. The metal recovered included 34,000 tonnes of copper, 123 tonnes of silver, 7.1 tonnes of gold and 5 tonnes of platinum and palladium. These amounted to (respectively) 5 per cent, 14 per cent, 5 per cent and 37 per cent of the amount of these metals produced in Canada by mining (Veldhuizen and Sippel [1994](#)).

An amendment to the Basel Convention agreed in 1995 banning trade for recycling between developed and developing countries was adopted by the Conference of the Parties, but more than a decade later it has still to receive sufficient ratifications for it to enter into force. Industry lobbied actively against the ban in numerous Asian nations: Korea, the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, India and Pakistan. While these representations had little effect on the support for a recycling ban by environment ministries, it appeared to do much to alert trade and industry agencies and foreign ministries to the possible impact of a ban on their access to secondary raw materials. The South East Asian Iron and Steel Institute, now headquartered in Malaysia, was active in lobbying against the ban applying to ferrous scrap.

Industry representatives from the lead, zinc, copper and steel secondary processing industries in India engaged with the issue. While India's Environment Ministry continued its strong support for a ban, other ministries in that country became concerned about its impact. Ultimately, at the suggestion of India, the amendment stated that trade in recyclables would not be prohibited unless the wastes in question were characterised as hazardous under the Convention. This was inserted to ensure India had continued access to the iron and steel scrap and other materials it needed from OECD countries.

India's High Court, in March 1996, banned the import of waste defined as 'toxic' according to OECD criteria for recycling, reprocessing or final disposal. This meant the importation of copper, brass, aluminium and base metal scrap could only be undertaken by holders of valid import licences. Subsequently, customs officials were reissuing licences, and small companies were complaining that (unlike larger companies) they were having trouble receiving new licences (*Metal Bulletin* [1996](#)). The Indian Non-Ferrous Metals Manufacturers' Association criticised this restrictive policy, pointing out that 25 per cent of all non-ferrous metal production came from secondary and scrap sources, with zinc ash imports running at 65,000 tonnes and lead scrap at 49,000 tonnes (the value of this trade was about US\$1 billion per annum). The ban resulted in rises in the price of lead and zinc scrap.

The Basel Convention was therefore seen by some as helping Europe, which was still able to trade waste among its members, by limiting access of developing countries to secondary raw materials. More broadly, it assisted the North in keeping control of waste treatment and recycling technology. Europe gained a trade advantage by limiting the supply of secondary raw materials to non-OECD markets. Asian states were therefore less able to compete in scrap metal markets against European materials and would have to import them.

Regional differentiation between trade considerations and environmental considerations has the potential for impacts that are not necessarily desirable from either an environmental or an economic perspective. Recycling non-ferrous metals saves energy and reduces pollution, water use and the production of mining wastes (Australian Bureau of Industry Economics [1995](#)). The industry employs 500,000 people in OECD countries and has a worldwide annual value of US\$20 billion. The value of trade in metal scrap and residues between OECD countries is estimated at US\$32.6 billion.

Exports from OECD to non-OECD countries is US\$8.2 billion, with OECD imports from non-OECD countries US\$4.3 billion and trade among non-OECD countries US\$1.8 billion. Basel had considerable potential to restrict developing country participation in this industry, but much of the potential negative impact was minimised by the understandable reluctance of nations in the Asia-Pacific to accept what was proposed by Europe.

APP 'minilateralism' versus Kyoto's globalism

Perhaps the most significant example of regional differences between (especially) Europe and the Asia-Pacific is climate change. The announcement in July 2005 of the formation of an Asia-Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate signalled what promises to be a distinctive future approach to climate change in the region, and which has the potential to serve as a foundation for a more successful global agreement (Kellow [2006](#)).

The inaugural APP meeting in Sydney on 11–12 January 2006 involved ministers and business representatives from the six founding members (Australia, China, India, Japan, South Korea and the US), who agreed on a charter, a communiqué and a work plan that outlined a new approach to international collaboration on climate change and energy. International government and business taskforces were established on cleaner fossil energy, aluminium, coal mining, steel, cement, buildings and appliances, power generation and transmission, and renewable energy and distributed generation.

The Australian government committed funding of A\$100 million over five years, A\$95 million to support activities within the Partnership and A\$5 million to support Australia's involvement in taskforces. Twenty-five per cent of the funds were specifically earmarked for renewable energy, with an overall focus on cleaner fossil and renewable sources. Industry partnerships must involve at least two APP partner countries, and are aimed at projects intended to provide the maximum clean development outcomes for partners from their investments. They therefore represent an attempt to build technological approaches to the problem in countries such as China and India, slowing future emissions growth by these significant present and future emitters.

The Kyoto Protocol to the Framework Convention on Climate Change

(FCCC) had previously failed to elicit commitments from developing countries to limit future growth in emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs). Without such commitments, the United States and Australia had refused to ratify Kyoto. It therefore made binding commitments only on Canada and Japan (which have little hope of meeting targets), as well as those who could offset the post-1990 growth against post-1990 collapse in emissions in Germany and the United Kingdom, thanks to the 'European Bubble' or Burden Sharing Agreement (BSA).

Kyoto's death knell had effectively been sounded in the weeks before the announcement of APP in the communiqué on climate change issued by the G8 leaders at Gleneagles. Significantly, while the communiqué sought to save face for those leaders who were committed to Kyoto, it stated that the FCCC (not Kyoto) provided the appropriate framework for the future for addressing the problem of climate change. The statement merely noted that those who had made commitments under Kyoto would honour them.

There were three problems with this. First, it was apparent to most that it was likely many of these countries (especially Canada and Japan) would fail to meet their targets. Second, even if they did meet their targets, there would be negligible benefits for the considerable costs involved. Finally, it was clear that Kyoto did not provide a productive basis for action beyond 2012, since neither the US nor India and China showed any inclination to accept Kyoto-style targets and timetables.

To take these in turn, trading under the 'European Bubble', the windfall reductions of the United Kingdom (resulting from electricity privatisation and the closure of coal mines and the resultant 'dash to gas') and Germany (resulting from the economic collapse of the former East German economy after reunification) were not alone sufficient. Europe would still need to purchase emissions entitlements from Russia to meet its collective commitments, and (as underlined by the point that Russia submitted its first national emissions report only in early 2007) there were concerns that this was merely 'hot air' that would contribute nothing to emissions reductions.

Second, reliance on trading, both under the European BSA and more widely, meant that there would be an even more modest reduction in GHG emissions than had been anticipated as a result of Kyoto. Kyoto would make an almost unnoticeable effect on GHG levels (and mean global temperatures) by 2100, and while it was widely justified as being merely a first step, it was now also regarded by many as a first step in the wrong direction. It imposed a

‘cap-and-trade’ system which would do little to bring about any actual reductions in GHG emissions, since those who had not already made largely involuntary progress after 1990 could meet their targets by buying what many had long regarded as ‘hot air’ from the Russian reductions attributable to their post-communist economic collapse. Russia knew that it would need entitlements in the longer term as its economy developed. In the meantime, it was happy to trade hot air for EU support for World Trade Organization (WTO) membership and investment in the development of its gas sector.

Perhaps the weakest aspect of Kyoto was the way it defined the nature of the problem to the advantage of Europe, and this weakened its moral force in other regions, especially in the Asia-Pacific. Kyoto was most advantageous to the two nations – Germany and the United Kingdom – which carried the greatest responsibility for the historical accumulation of GHGs in the atmosphere. Since the residence time of GHGs, like carbon dioxide (CO₂), is around 100 years, Kyoto erred by treating the problem as if it were one of flows, rather than stocks. As a result, the high per capita present-day emitters were expected by Kyoto to do more to address the problem than those who had disproportionately contributed to its cause over the preceding century. The unfairness of Kyoto was further exacerbated by the selection of 1990 as a base year against which emissions reduction targets would be specified, because it so advantaged those states (the UK, Germany, Russia) that had fortuitously seen GHG reductions occur after that year. The losers were nations such as Japan, which had undertaken significant measures to improve energy efficiency prior to 1990.

Kyoto was a poor model for future progress in addressing climate change because it was decidedly Eurocentric, and it made much less sense in the Asia-Pacific. While it imposed no immediate costs on developing countries, it would be ineffective unless it evolved so as to bring about at least a slowing in future GHG emissions as Asia-Pacific countries industrialised. Kyoto did promise, through mechanisms such as trading, Activities Implemented Jointly and the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) incentives for participation. However, these would be more than offset by any future imposition of constraints on their economies. Put simply, because Kyoto required little of its strongest supporters, why should developing countries take on commitments that might limit their own development? Not only did it not suit the interests of resource-extractive economies like that of Australia, it did not lead to a point where the ‘logic’ could be developed

further to bind future emitters such as India and China into the regime which threatens to render trivial the projected GHG reductions of Europe.

APP and energy security in the Asia-Pacific

Climate change and decarbonisation policies have much to do with energy sources and their security. Coal, oil, gas, and then hydro, nuclear and renewables like wind and solar offer a diminishing hierarchy in terms of GHG emissions for each unit of energy produced. Whereas Europe has closed most of its (high-cost) coal mines and has relatively little oil, the countries of the Asia-Pacific region have substantial endowments of fossil fuels that they intend to utilise as they industrialise.

The bulk of the world's proven high-rank coal reserves lie in North America, Asia and Oceania. Both North America and Asia have over 25 per cent each of total global reserves. While Europe still has substantial reserves, these are mostly of lower-rank coals. Yet reserve estimates tell only part of the story. The other is price: the cost disparity between steaming coal prices in Europe and producers such as the US, Australia, South Africa and Indonesia reached a factor of four by the time Kyoto was being negotiated. Given the fact that coal generates the most CO₂ per joule of energy, there should be little surprise at the reluctance of the US and Australia to ratify Kyoto, and the attraction of the APP to both nations, not to mention other states in the Asia-Pacific.

Europe and the Asia-Pacific thus have widely divergent regional views of coal, and there is little coal industry left in countries like the UK and France. Germany's output of both hard coal and lignite fell by half over the 1990s. Its hard coal lies in deep seams (over 900 metres deep) and it is thus expensive to mine. It has reserves totalling over 300 years of production, but it is too expensive to be internationally competitive, and is heavily subsidised. This is also the case with the UK, which has only forty years of production remaining. But (relatively speaking) there is abundant cheap coal in the Asia-Pacific region: Australia has 270 years of production; the US, 250; China, 111; Canada, 90; India, 268; Indonesia, 76; Pakistan, 686; Russia, 629; and Thailand, 69 (World Energy Council [2007](#)).

Given this resource distribution, it is clear that coal will lie near the centre of the economic development of the region, in a way that is markedly different from that of Europe. Clearly, clean coal technology is of enormous

interest in the region, and it features prominently in the APP approach – much to the chagrin of environmental NGOs.

Emissions of CO₂ are higher from coal than from either natural gas or distillate oil-fired combined cycle units. Moreover, the competitive price of natural gas makes it attractive in a greenhouse environment as the easiest way of achieving substantial decarbonisation at relatively low cost. As gas and oil are frequently co-products, this means that both will be significant in the energy future of the region. The future is likely to see overlapping phases of development: a ‘dash to gas’ similar to that which, after 1990, made Kyoto so advantageous for Europe, followed by increasing penetration of clean coal technology.

Gas is already becoming an important regional energy source. China's consumption of coal in 1999 decreased, but it increased its natural gas consumption by 10.9 per cent over 1998. In the Asia-Pacific region, consumption of natural gas is increasing rapidly. It is anticipated that a fairly significant portion of future energy demand in the region will be met by natural gas. The export trade in natural gas (especially as liquefied natural gas – LNG) is important: of the 485 billion cubic metres of gas traded internationally in 1999, about 25 per cent or 124 billion cubic metres was transported in the form of LNG, 75 per cent of which was shipped to the Asia-Pacific.

Unlike coal, of which there are substantial reserves in the region, the uneven distribution of oil and gas reserves could give rise to future concerns over security of supply and tensions over new and potential resources. Concerns over secure access to resources are common to many countries, given the concentration of petrochemical resources in the Middle East (Yergin [2006](#); Yergin, Eklof and Edwards [1998](#)), and freedom of navigation is of obvious importance for Asian nations (Dannreuther [2003](#); Xu [2006](#); Zha [2006](#)). The emergence of new technologies allowing deep ocean exploration and extraction during the 1990s, however, will undoubtedly heighten tensions over maritime and other territorial disputes. We have seen some of these tensions over the Timor Gap, but disputes in the South China Sea (over the Spratly Islands, for example) and the East China Sea are potentially more serious.

The place of gas and coal in the region's future electricity supply is strongly linked to its oil future. The location of reserves is the basis of concerns over energy security, and the great challenge for countries which

lack the enormous reserves to be found in the Middle East is to find energy resources which can replace the role played by liquid fossil fuels in transportation. This has the potential to exacerbate maritime boundary disputes between Japan, Korea and China.

Hydro-electric development is a potential source of both cooperation and conflict. Several river basins (most notably the Mekong) transect national boundaries, and development could interfere with flow characteristics, and even result in abstraction. Changes in both flow patterns and absolute volume flows have consequences for downstream countries, and present possible points of conflict that require management. The potential for cooperation is not quite so obvious, but the financial scale of possible development in countries such as Nepal (an important factor in its development prospects) is likely to make development dependent on power export contracts with another state, such as India.

Nuclear energy raises a whole different set of environmental and security challenges which it is not necessary to revisit here, but the nuclear industry has had a renaissance thanks to climate change, with even some environmentalists calling for a reopening of the debate. The nuclear path is already being followed in the region, and this is likely to continue. China is a relative newcomer to nuclear energy, and its nuclear weapons programme preceded its energy programme, not the other way around. Its first nuclear power plant, a 279 megawatt electric (MWe) pressurised water reactor (PWR) at Qinshan, near Shanghai, was commissioned in December 1991. There followed two larger PWRs (each 944 MWe) at Daya Bay (Guangdong province) in 1993–4. By the end of 1999, China's nuclear generating capacity was 2,167 MWe, with output from these three units providing only 1.2 per cent of electricity generation. However, seven more nuclear units were under construction at the end of 1999, with a capacity of about 5.4 gigawatt electric, and installed capacity stood at 6,572 MWe by the end of 2005, with plans announced to increase this sixfold by 2020.

At the end of 2005, India had fifteen reactor units in operation, with an aggregate net generating capacity of 3,040 MWe. Nuclear sources accounted for 2.8 per cent of total electricity generation in 2005. Construction began on the first of two Russian-designed reactors at Kudankulam in Tamil Nadu in 2001. Further additions were planned, with India's long-term objective for nuclear capacity being 24,000 MWe (gross) by 2020 and 50,000 MWe by 2030. In order to achieve this goal, it plans to develop fast breeder reactors

and to use its substantial indigenous reserves of thorium.

For the two largest countries in the region, therefore, the nuclear option is near the forefront of their energy planning, and the ability to source energy resources from domestic sources is clearly an important factor in their decision-making. The Republic of Korea has a sizeable commitment to nuclear energy, with 45 per cent of its electricity in 2005 being supplied by nuclear capacity. The proportion is 29 per cent in Japan, and by 2020 there are expected to be sixty-eight nuclear reactors in operation, with a total gross capacity of 66,810 MWe. Having few indigenous energy resources, nuclear energy is important for Japan as a stable supply of electricity. Of particular interest, Taiwan has six reactors totalling 4,904 MWe and providing 18 per cent of its electricity. There are also more modest nuclear plans in Bangladesh, Indonesia, Pakistan, the Philippines and Vietnam.

The transfer of nuclear technology to Pakistan by China and to India by the former Soviet Union, and the subsequent development of nuclear weapons by both, underscores the strategic importance of this technology, which has been made more attractive by the climate change issue. The recent tensions over the nuclear programme of the People's Democratic Republic of Korea, and the substantial existing and planned nuclear programme of Taiwan, underscore the interrelationships between energy security and competitiveness and strategic considerations in the region. But the nuclear weapons genie is well and truly out of the bottle in the region, and the challenge is to manage the problem; it is already too late to prevent proliferation (Wesley [2005](#)).

When the resource endowment and energy security realities of the Asia-Pacific region are considered, both Kyoto and APP can be seen to have vastly different significance for Europe and the Asia-Pacific. While Kyoto was superficially attractive, it was flawed. By this statement, I mean that 'cap-and-trade' approaches are by far the most desirable instrument for regulating environmental pollution. They allow abatement to occur at lowest marginal cost and minimise distortions. But the Kyoto cap was not 'one size fits all', and neither was it required to be worn by all. The true test of international climate policy was always going to be what kind of means would be adopted by those whose future emissions (as they industrialised) had the potential to render meaningless the efforts of the FCCC Annex I parties to mitigate their emissions.

Kyoto was too kind for Europe, and reflected diplomatic skill on the part of

the EU negotiators. However, it was too clever by half to serve as the basis for future global policy, especially as a moral construct, because it required least of those who had contributed most, and because the delivery of outcomes in Europe lagged behind the US. As the US Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick was quick to point out at the press conference in Vientiane at which APP was announced, in the first three years of the George W. Bush administration, US GHG emissions reduced marginally, while those of the EU15 rose by 3.6 per cent and those of the EU25 by 3.4 per cent (USINFO [2005](#)).

One further problem with Kyoto for the Asia-Pacific has been a focus on decarbonisation first and foremost. It applies to a basket of GHGs other than CO₂, and all of these are much more powerful in their effects than CO₂. It is the sheer scale of CO₂ emissions which has resulted in much of the discourse simply ignoring these other gases, as well as a whole raft of contributing factors – or, perhaps, more accurately, that a focus on CO₂ has also suited some interests. There is an appealing simplicity in targeting the largest single agent of greenhouse forcing. It has not necessarily been the wisest policy approach to do so, however, and the APP reflects a recognition that other components of the problem could be mitigated either more readily (in a technical sense) or more economically.

The APP reflects the science behind what is known as the Hansen alternative scenario (Hansen *et al.* [2000](#)). This acknowledges that while CO₂ is the largest single factor causing anthropogenic warming, it does not dwarf the others. Indeed, James Hansen *et al.* ([2000](#): 9876) contend that because fossil fuel consumption has been accompanied by both CO₂ emissions and cooling aerosols, the non-CO₂ GHGs have been the primary drivers for climate change in the past century. Hansen *et al.* argue for a focus on drivers of climate change (such as black soot and tropospheric ozone) which could be mitigated more readily and more cheaply, while noting that ‘investments in technology to improve energy efficiency and develop nonfossil energy sources are also needed to slow the growth of CO₂ emissions and expand future policy options’ (Hansen *et al.* [2000](#): 9879).

The attraction of focusing on forcings such as black soot is that it also provides significant incidental benefits such as improvements in mortality from emissions from diesel engines and coal-fired power plants, and from combustion of bio-fuels (significant in India and other parts of Asia, where

indoor air pollution is perhaps the most serious environmental problem – especially for women and children). The Partnership provides for technology and investment-led approaches in cleaner utilisation of bio-fuels, and stands in contrast to European encouragement for bio-diesel, which is exacerbating deforestation of rainforests for conversion to palm oil plantations – with an associated release of GHGs.

The six founding members of APP account for 45 per cent of global gross domestic product, 48 per cent of global energy consumption, 50 per cent of global GHG emissions and 45 per cent of population (Australian Government [2007](#): 3). Perhaps more importantly, by including China and India, APP addresses the most significant sources of *future* GHG emissions. It will seek to foster research and investment aimed at cleaner, more efficient energy utilisation in the Asia-Pacific region, including renewable energy and energy efficiency, remote area power supplies, LNG, methane capture and use, clean coal, nuclear power, advanced transportation, agriculture and forestry. Success is not guaranteed, but others have expressed an interest in joining a framework which surpasses Kyoto in its coverage, and Canada has joined.

Clearly, APP sets the environmental framework for future energy development in the region. Together with economics and energy security considerations, it sets the scene for future energy policy in the region. But it sets the Asia-Pacific apart from Europe, which was able to form a coalition with the G77 group of developing nations during the negotiation of Kyoto – to their mutual advantage. Any successor to Kyoto will have to take account of the regional differences between Europe and the Asia-Pacific, further consolidated in the Sydney Declaration on Climate negotiated during the September 2007 APEC meeting in Australia.

Conclusion

This analysis shows why the APP clearly benefits the region. Both energy security concerns and regional resource endowments in the Asia-Pacific differ from those in Europe. APP will shape the energy future of the region, and it is highly likely that more and more parties will come on board as there is a close fit between the energy future of the region and this new approach to climate change. As the Hansen alternative scenario shows, it is a more productive approach to focus on least-cost mitigation, measures with co-benefits, and future investment which will direct future development of

energy utilisation technologies. These will not only limit future emissions growth, but eventually see the replacement of existing plant with new technologies as old capital plant is retired. APP is a good fit for the Asia-Pacific, just as Kyoto was a good fit for Europe, and a global approach (if it is to be more productive than Kyoto) needs to factor in these regional differences.

We can point, perhaps, not just to a new approach to climate policy, but a new model for the development of multilateral environmental agreements. The results of past MEAs have generally been disappointing, and many of the features that have assisted their development (conference diplomacy, iterative functionalism, creative ambiguity, double standards provisions, blame and shame tactics by NGOs, and so on) contain the seeds of their failure. In international environmental policy there is much oratory and many good intentions but an insufficiency of good outcomes.

APP is an agreement with seven parties that operates in a broadly regional context. It builds on a bilateral agreement between the US and Australia, and it promises to grow to include more parties, assigning it an increasingly global importance. Yet, the presently modest scope of the agreement and its currently limited number of parties have facilitated the development of a relatively cohesive policy approach which, by bringing in China and India (and possibly others), has the potential to be a much more effective policy instrument than Kyoto. It conforms to the characteristics of more effective agreements outlined by Vogel: as few parties as possible, and limited scope. When added to the 'G8+5' dialogue, it has formed the basis for the Major Economies Meeting convened by the US, within which the post-Kyoto architecture is most likely to be developed.

As confirmed by the example of the Basel amendment banning trade for recycling, agreements that have markedly different impacts and meanings from one region to the next are not likely to be successful. Not only can regionally based 'minilateralism' serve as the basis for more extensive global agreement, but it has the potential to provide a basis for regionally limited progress on issues that might not be the focus of much effective action as agreements that ignore regional variations progress at a slower pace.

* The author would like to thank Matthew Sussex for reading numerous drafts of this chapter and offering many helpful comments and suggestions.

15 Regional health and global security: the Asian cradle of pandemic influenza

Christian Enemark

East Asia is a pandemic epicentre. The last two pandemics, the 1957 ‘Asian flu’ and the 1968 ‘Hong Kong flu’ (and probably the 1918 ‘Spanish flu’ as well), originated there and the region is likely to remain a cradle of emerging infectious diseases in the future. Drawing on this book's over-arching theme of a regional–global nexus, this chapter analyses the security significance of an East Asian health problem that threatens to ignite a worldwide health crisis. Notwithstanding the possibility of biological warfare, microbial threats to human health come from *within* a state rather than *from* a state. And states have an innate inability to contain by themselves a highly contagious disease that transcends political borders. For the purpose of security analysis, therefore, the capacity of a state to project power is not the primary concern of this chapter. Rather, the focus for analysis is how the weakness of a state can threaten to weaken others. As regards the regional–global nexus, the path to security is overwhelmingly through state and non-state actors cooperating to reduce collective vulnerability rather than a competition for power in the international order.

In general, so-called ‘transnational’ security challenges defy any arbitrary delineation between regional and global security. Indeed, pandemic influenza as a security challenge is not region-specific; a pandemic is global by definition. However, for epidemiological reasons, any worthwhile analysis of the likely origins of a pandemic and the opportunities for preventing or delaying such an event requires an East Asian focus. In terms of both health and security, recognition of a regional–global nexus is vital. The SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome) outbreak of 2003 demonstrated that a health threat could adversely affect East Asia's own regional security. And in the face of a looming influenza pandemic, the region's ability to guard against a disease outbreak affects whether a regional problem could explode into a crisis of global proportions.

This chapter opens with a background assessment followed by a conceptual discussion of why pandemic influenza may be characterised as a security threat. The epidemiology of the H5N1 avian influenza virus is highly relevant to this discussion, as is the likely reaction to a pandemic by states

and the people who live within them. The remainder of the chapter is then devoted to analysing the nexus, as regards the threat of pandemic influenza, between regional health and global security.

Pandemic influenza as a security challenge

The influenza virus known as H5N1 first appeared in Hong Kong chicken farms in 1997, infecting eighteen people, of whom six died. Although the properties of the virus were not well known at the time, the killing of all poultry in Hong Kong's markets and farms was a precaution that may well have averted a larger human outbreak of the disease. Thereafter, H5N1 was largely forgotten but not gone. On 12 December 2003, South Korea's chief veterinary officer sent an emergency report to the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) in Paris: a large number of chickens on a farm near Seoul had suddenly died of a highly pathogenic avian influenza – a disease never before seen in the country. By early January 2004, reports were emerging of a 'mysterious disease' that had killed thousands of chickens in southern Vietnam (*Sydney Morning Herald* [2004](#)). H5N1 had returned and this time was here to stay. In the months that followed, an epidemic of the H5N1 avian influenza virus swept through East Asia, forcing government authorities to cull more than 120 million birds. After the virus infected wild birds at Qinghai Lake in China in mid-2005, it rapidly spread westward into Europe, India, the Middle East and Africa. As of July 2008, H5N1 outbreaks in birds had occurred in forty-eight countries (OIE Online [2008](#)).

The security significance of the H5N1 avian influenza virus lies in the possibility that it will mutate into a form capable of sustained human-to-human transmission. The virus has repeatedly managed to jump species and successfully infect humans, and every instance of this is a potential mutation opportunity. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), as of June 2008 there had been 385 confirmed cases of human H5N1 infection across fifteen countries since late 2003, including 243 deaths (a global average fatality rate of around 63 per cent) (WHO Online [2008](#)). The overwhelming majority of victims lived in East Asia. Throughout this region, the danger of human contact with H5N1-infected birds is increased by traditional practices of raising and handling poultry. One dimension of this is the common practice of selling a wide variety of live poultry at 'wet markets', which are potential sites for influenza virus transmission between bird species and from

birds to humans. Another dimension is small-scale animal husbandry – across East Asia, millions of impoverished families raise poultry at home in order to supplement their diets and income. In Indonesia, for example, 60 per cent of households keep backyard chickens (around 300 million birds) and there are 13,000 live poultry markets (Normile [2007a](#): 31–2). As of June 2008, the country had the greatest number of human deaths from H5N1 infection (110) and the highest case-fatality rate in the world (81 per cent) (WHO Online [2008](#)). In an attempt to reduce opportunities for human infection, the governor of Jakarta has designated ‘chicken-free zones’ and banned the unlicensed possession of all domestic birds (Williamson [2007](#)).

The next influenza pandemic could cause illness and death on a large scale, over a wide area, in a short space of time. The worst pandemic of the twentieth century was the 1918 ‘Spanish flu’ which killed around 50 million people worldwide. Subsequent pandemics in 1957 and 1968 were much less deadly, causing 2 million and 1 million deaths respectively. The conservative estimate of WHO, using epidemiological modelling based on 1957 data, is that a future influenza pandemic would cause between 2 million and 7.4 million deaths worldwide (WHO Online [2005](#)). However, another estimate based on 1918–20 data has predicted 62 million deaths (Murray *et al.* [2006](#)). Influenza virus in pandemic form would not generate rates of mortality as high as have been seen in confirmed bird-to-human H5N1 infections. However, that would mean estimates of influenza deaths represent only a fraction of the number of people who would be hospitalised, and an even smaller proportion of those who would be infected and fall ill. For example, the government of Australia (population 21 million) has estimated that a pandemic would result in 13,000 to 44,000 deaths, 57,900 to 148,000 hospitalisations, and 1 million to 7.5 million outpatient visits (Australian Department of Health and Ageing [2006](#): 51).

Alongside high levels of illness and death, an influenza pandemic would cause immense economic disruption. A study published in 2006 by the Lowy Institute for International Policy considered four scenarios for an influenza pandemic. The authors estimated that a mild pandemic would result in 1.4 million deaths and a cost to the global economy of US\$330 billion in lost economic output. The worst-case scenario was 142 million dead and a loss to the global economy of US\$4.4 trillion (McKibbin and Sidorenko [2006](#)). However, something that is expensive is not necessarily a security challenge. Beyond calculations of the adverse human health impact and economic loss

likely to result from an influenza pandemic, the security significance of such an event needs to be seen in terms of societal consequences and perceptions. The two key elements in the security equation are speed and dread.

A new human influenza virus, most likely originating in East Asia, would be rapidly propelled along the highways of globalisation. It would cause moving waves of outbreaks in humans lasting one to two months in a given region and complete its global spread in eight to twelve months or less (Stöhr and Esveld [2004](#): 2195). Pandemic influenza would thus compress time and space, and the widespread damage caused would seem all the worse because it happened so quickly. In contemplating the security dimension of this threat, it is useful to consider why it is that military threats are traditionally accorded the highest priority among national concerns. For Barry Buzan, the answer lies in the swiftness with which the use of armed force can inflict major undesired changes: 'Military action can wreck the work of centuries in all other sectors. Difficult accomplishments in politics, art, industry, culture and all human activities can be undone by the use of force' (Buzan [1991b](#): 117). Just as states fear military conflict because so many national achievements could be quickly undone, so too an influenza pandemic would set back hard-won economic gains and potentially undermine trust in government. And like the all-consuming effort of prosecuting a war, defeating 'the flu' would become a first-order issue for governments, one which would alter the premise for all other activity. The US government's pandemic plan, for example, includes the statement: 'In terms of its scope, the impact of a severe pandemic may be more comparable to that of war or a widespread economic crisis than a hurricane, earthquake, or act of terrorism' (Homeland Security Council [2006](#): 2).

Related to the speed of a pandemic is the dread it would evoke: individual fear of infection and collective fear of contagion. Pandemic influenza is an infectious disease threat which inspires in humans a visceral and personal dread, and which is therefore likely to generate a level of societal disruption disproportionate to the health burden it poses. Other infectious diseases exacting a heavy human toll around the world include HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. However, the relative familiarity of these ongoing and slow-moving diseases means they are not accompanied by the acute fear that touches the security nerve of people and politicians. Pandemic influenza could produce horrific symptoms unfamiliar to ordinary people, and the anxiety this generated would likely be compounded by the inability of

medical professionals to provide adequate treatment.

Under circumstances in which a fast-spreading and unfamiliar disease is inspiring dread and potentially stimulating panic among national populations, the social contract under which citizens rely on governments to protect them during times of crisis would be subjected to severe pressure. The SARS outbreak of 2003 provided a glimpse of this phenomenon when, in parts of China, there were riots caused by rumours of government plans to establish local SARS patient isolation wards (Eckholm [2003](#)). In 1994, an epidemic of plague in the Indian city of Surat engendered such terror that a quarter of the population fled within four days. This exodus, as Peter Chalk observed, ‘fuelled an unprecedented level of anxiety across India, with fear and ignorance combining to freeze out even basic inter-personal sentiments of caring and civility...So great was this national hysteria that the Delhi government was forced to bring in a police Rapid Reaction Force to effectively quarantine Surat’ (Chalk [2006](#): 127). Such incidents demonstrate the panic caused when populations imagine a disease out of control, and where governments are seemingly incapable of securing the safety of their citizens.

Although it is impossible to predict precisely how the public would behave in response to the next influenza pandemic, it is clear that some governments expect severe social disruption as national health systems come under severe and unprecedented pressure. In Britain, for example, contingency plans for a pandemic include posting police at doctors’ surgeries and health clinics to stop panicking crowds from stealing anti-viral medication (Tendler [2005](#)). In the US, the Pentagon's plan for pandemic influenza includes the provision: ‘When directed by the President, DoD will provide support to civil authorities in the event of a civil disturbance’ (US Department of Defense [2006a](#): 16). The Australian government's strategy is to maintain basic social functioning: ‘Australians should receive the best possible health care commensurate with the maintenance of a safe and secure society’ (Australian Department of Health and Ageing [2006](#): 51).

After analysing why pandemic influenza may be characterised as a security challenge, it remains to address the issue of a regional–global security nexus. The epidemiological position is that East Asia is currently experiencing a health problem that threatens to ignite a worldwide health crisis. The concomitant political challenge is to respond in a way that recognises the important relationship between that region's health and global security.

The regional–global security nexus

In contemplating a regional–global nexus, it is useful at the outset to compare the health and finance sectors. The 1997 Asian financial crisis was referred to by some economists as the ‘Asian flu’ because they feared, given the global nature of capital and the quick movement of traders’ panic from one market to the next, that the crisis in Asia would quickly spread to the US and Europe. As Ruth Levine has observed: ‘In the financial sector, the intensity of the global connections is very well understood...In sharp contrast, most policymakers lack this same type of instinctive understanding about the spread of disease’ (Levine [2006](#): 228). After the Asian financial crisis started, the international rescue package included International Monetary Fund (IMF) commitments of US\$35 billion for Indonesia, South Korea and Thailand, and another US\$85 billion from other multilateral and bilateral sources. By contrast, wealthy countries and international financial institutions commit very little to solving public health problems, even those that have major health and economic consequences for themselves: ‘We appear to be far less willing to spend or lend big than we are when faced with financial sector contagion’ (Levine [2006](#): 230).

In East Asia, the problem of H5N1 avian influenza is an ongoing health challenge, but the international response within and beyond the region needs to be commensurate with the global security consequences of this virus mutating into a pandemic form. For the purposes of this chapter, three important issues requiring analysis are: (1) the state of national systems and regional institutions for health in East Asia; (2) the requirements for international assistance to the region; and (3) the development, production and distribution of pandemic influenza vaccines, and the integral role played by pharmaceutical companies.

Health systems in East Asia

Factors that affect a health system's ability to respond to an outbreak event like pandemic influenza include: the extent to which citizens can access health care; disease surveillance capabilities; and the capacity of the health system to cope with a sudden surge in demand for medical treatment. Across East Asia, there is much scope to enhance national health system capabilities, with some systems more in need of improvement than others. The numerical data presented in [table 15.1](#) indicate varying degrees of resource allocation by

countries within the region, and suggest roughly how each is positioned to respond to ongoing health problems as well as an outbreak emergency.

To perform reliably the tasks of controlling infected poultry populations, detecting human H5N1 influenza cases, and isolating and treating infected people, countries require adequate numbers of veterinarians, public health experts, laboratory scientists and health-care workers. In addition, there needs to be a public health infrastructure with the capacity to coordinate all these efforts. National capabilities vary within East Asia, in large measure because of local governance challenges. For example, Indonesia, a country of 220 million people spread across 3,000 inhabited islands and representing 350 ethnic minorities, lacks the strong

Table 15.1 Health resources in East Asia

Country	Population in 2004	Physicians per 1,000 Year	Nurses per 1,000 Year	Total health expenditure (% of GDP) in 2003
Brunei	366,000	1.01 2000	2.67 2000	3.5
Cambodia	13,798,000	0.16 2000	0.61 2000	10.9
China	1,315,409,000	1.06 2001	1.05 2001	5.6
Indonesia	220,077,000	0.13 2003	0.57 2003	3.1
Japan	127,923,000	1.98 2002	7.79 2002	7.9
Laos	5,792,000	0.59 1996	1.03 1996	3.2
Malaysia	24,894,000	0.70 2000	1.35 2000	3.8
Myanmar	50,004,000	0.36 2004	0.20 2004	2.8
North Korea	22,384,000	3.29 2003	3.85 2003	5.8
Philippines	81,617,000	0.58 2000	1.69 2000	3.2
Singapore	4,273,000	1.40 2001	4.24 2001	4.5
South Korea	47,645,000	1.57 2003	1.75 2003	5.6
Thailand	63,694,000	0.37 2000	2.82 2000	3.3
Timor-Leste	887,000	0.10 2004	1.79 2004	9.6
Vietnam	83,123,000	0.53 2001	0.56 2001	5.4

Source: WHO [2006](#): 169–99.

central government and established veterinary capabilities of the kind that enabled top-down avian influenza control programmes to work in Thailand and Vietnam (Normile [2007a](#): 31).

On the vital issue of disease surveillance, global systems such as the WHO

Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network rely heavily on the accuracy and effectiveness of local systems. In parts of East Asia, national disease surveillance systems suffer from inadequate sensitivity and incomplete reporting of illness and outbreaks. In August 2006, for example, the Chinese government revealed that its first human death from H5N1 avian influenza occurred in late 2003, two years before China first publicly acknowledged a human infection (Macartney [2006](#)). This means H5N1 was present in China before the outbreak of the virus was disclosed elsewhere in Asia. Although this revelation provoked accusations about the government's poor commitment to transparency, it is possible simply that China's ability to detect emerging diseases is inadequate. Effective disease surveillance is particularly dependent upon adequate diagnostic laboratory capacity. Testing for H5N1 antibodies in a human tissue sample is technically difficult, time-consuming and expensive. And because it involves the use of live H5N1 virus, it should be carried out in high-containment laboratories, of which East Asia has few. As of May 2005, laboratory facilities in Hanoi were so limited that it was taking up to one week for the return of blood-test results, by which time influenza patients were sometimes already dead (Watts [2005](#): 1759).

In addition to the poor state of national health systems, the capacity to prevent or respond to outbreak events like pandemic influenza in East Asia is hindered by inadequate regionalisation of health (see Caballero-Anthony [2006](#): 116; Thomas [2006](#): 936). Because of deeper integration within East Asia, threats within a particular state can now more readily cross national borders to become a problem for other states. The 1997 Asian financial crisis was an impetus for East Asian states to enhance economic and financial capacity together, and they have since engaged in collective policy-making in other areas such as education, labour and the environment (Thomas [2006](#): 918–19). By contrast, the area of health has been largely neglected by regional institutions. This is despite the reality that an infectious disease outbreak that crosses political borders can itself become an economic crisis. In the second quarter of 2003 alone, the SARS outbreak cost the regional economy of East Asia US\$60 billion of gross expenditure and business losses (Rossi and Walker [2005](#): 19). And according to a November 2005 report by the Asian Development Bank, an influenza pandemic would see a regionwide reduction in annual gross domestic product (GDP) levels of between US\$99.2 billion and US\$282.7 billion (Bloom, de Wit and Carangal San-Jose [2005](#): 6–7).

For the reasons set out in the first part of this chapter, pandemic influenza would be a security challenge as well as an economic crisis for East Asia. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Forum has recognised this in official pronouncements on the importance of disease surveillance and national pandemic preparedness plans (ASEAN Regional Forum [2006](#)). On the whole, however, as Chalk ([2006](#): 129) observes:

the actual and potential dangers associated with microbial agents... [have] yet to figure prominently in the policy and decision-making architecture of A-P [Asia-Pacific] governments, the vast bulk of which continue to conceive disease – writ large – as a public health *problem* that necessarily belongs outside the strictures of national and international security.

The best example of a regional approach to the H5N1 outbreak is the ASEAN avian influenza taskforce, established in December 2004. However, responsibility for combating the disease was divided among only the five wealthiest members of the grouping: Thailand on surveillance and diagnosis; Indonesia on vaccination; Malaysia on containment and exports; Philippines on raising public awareness; and Singapore on regional information-sharing. Although this approach reflects the sites of greatest capacity in the region, it cannot be considered a truly regional approach to the H5N1 problem (Thomas [2006](#): 929). Another possible forum for addressing the pandemic threat emanating from East Asia is the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) group which, among other measures, has established an emerging infectious diseases network (EINet) to facilitate internet-based information-sharing throughout the region (see <http://depts.washington.edu/einet/>). In May 2006, APEC conducted a ministerial meeting in Vietnam at which an Action Plan on the Prevention and Response to Avian and Influenza Pandemics was adopted, and the APEC economic leaders subsequently committed themselves to its implementation (APEC Online [2006a](#)). It remains to be seen, however, how effective an APEC-driven cooperative response to the threat of pandemic influenza would be. In particular, it is cause for concern that the rhetoric of East Asian states and economies has yet to translate into adequate commitments of financial, material and technical assistance. When it comes to resource allocation, the APEC Action Plan emphasises reliance on contributions from donor economies and multilateral organisations rather than the reordering of national budgets (see APEC

Online [2006b](#)).

In any event, although the problem of H5N1 avian influenza is for the present largely confined to East Asia, the pandemic that this virus threatens to ignite is a global concern attracting global responsibility. As such, international institutions drawing on global resources are an important complement to regional institutions. WHO in particular has greater scientific authority and a clearer public health mission than groupings like ASEAN and APEC.

International assistance

Under revised International Health Regulations (IHR) which entered into force in June 2007, WHO now has broader powers and member countries have greater obligations to detect and respond to public health emergencies of international concern. For the purposes of this chapter, the most important area of WHO reform concerns the strengthening of national health system capacity. A disease outbreak is more likely to acquire international significance if it occurs in a place where there is insufficient national capacity to recognise quickly the occurrence and extent of the outbreak; to deploy trained personnel to investigate and confirm reports of illness; to identify the disease's causative agent in the laboratory; and to implement effective interventions to contain the spread of disease. Accordingly, the new IHR give WHO member states two years to assess their capabilities to identify, verify and respond to health emergencies, and five years to develop such capabilities.

However, implementing this reform is likely to entail considerable expense, and many developing countries are already struggling to establish and maintain the public health infrastructure necessary to care for their populations. Cambodia, for example, already spends more than 10 per cent of GDP on health (see [table 15.1](#)). Thus such countries are understandably reluctant to divert national health resources away from clear and present health challenges and towards addressing a pandemic threat which may or may not materialise soon. The WHO director of IHR coordination, Guénaél Rodier, has suggested that IHR implementation may require nations to be innovative and find budget lines outside the health sector, such as those for security. He draws a comparison between funding for public health contingencies and funding for military assets which continues even during times of peace (Rodier [2007](#): 429). This is an ambitious proposition,

however. Until governments have generally accepted the security significance of pandemic influenza, it would be difficult to persuade them that national security would be enhanced by reducing defence spending.

In the meantime, in the context of potential pandemic influenza, the best hope is for wealthy countries voluntarily to provide additional resources to those poorer countries from which a global outbreak would most probably originate. During the first identifiable 'pre-pandemic' phase of history, the two most important areas requiring international assistance are: (1) reducing opportunities for human infection with the avian H5N1 virus; and (2) preparing for damage control in the event that the virus mutates into a form transmissible between humans. Regarding the first area, risk reduction strategies have included culling of infected birds and vaccination of those likely to be infected. However, because initial outbreaks of H5N1 in poultry were not contained, the virus has become endemic to the region. By early 2007 in Indonesia, for example, thirty out of thirty-three provinces were reportedly infected by avian influenza (Normile [2007a](#): 30). This reality has led to a shift in emphasis away from reducing opportunities for human infection and towards early detection of human-to-human disease transmission and preparing for pandemic damage control.

International financial contributions towards improving East Asian health system capacity in these areas would be more than simple acts of charity. Rather, donor countries would be helping to pay for systems which would bring health and security benefits to them as well. Australia, for example, has stated that it is in its own best interests to be a major player in regional disease surveillance. This is essentially because detecting and responding to overseas outbreaks relieves the Australian health system of infectious disease casualties that might otherwise arrive undetected in Australia. To this end, Australia deploys epidemiologists and microbiologists throughout Asia and the Pacific to engage in surveillance, laboratory diagnosis and outbreak investigation (Australian DFAT [2004](#)). Against the specific threat of emerging infectious diseases in the Asia-Pacific region, in November 2005 Australia committed A\$100 million over four years (Australian Department of Health and Ageing [2006](#): 27).

At a conference in Beijing the following January, the world's major aid donors, led by the US and the European Union, pledged US\$1.9 billion towards preventing an influenza pandemic. About half of this sum was to be spent in Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Indonesia and Thailand on strengthening

animal and human disease surveillance, altering agrarian practices, compensating and supporting poultry farmers, improving laboratory and health services, and boosting the communication capacity of these countries (Cheng [2006](#)). Under the circumstances, US\$1.9 billion is not a large amount and is far from commensurate with the gravity of the global threat presented in official pronouncements. Despite rhetoric from the US government, for example, that it is seeking to ‘heighten awareness’ of the pandemic threat, ‘promote the development’ of other nations’ health capacity and ‘encourage transparency’ in disease reporting, the US share of the January 2006 pledge was a mere US\$334 million (see Homeland Security Council [2006](#): 4).

Providing international health assistance in East Asia – to reduce opportunities for human H5N1 infection, increase capacity for early detection of human-to-human disease transmission and generally improve outbreak response capacity – is a valuable strategy for preventing or delaying the explosion of a regional health problem into a global security concern. Once a pandemic is underway, however, the most important task will be damage control. Although national and international health authorities are preparing to employ a variety of non-pharmaceutical measures such as ‘social distancing’ (including quarantine and isolation), the single most important defence against pandemic influenza is vaccination. Unfortunately, current global capacity for vaccine production and distribution is extremely limited, and many developing countries in East Asia fear missing out altogether. Unless there is confidence that a regional–global nexus would be maintained when it comes to the sharing of global vaccine supplies, countries in East Asia might see little benefit in cooperating on vaccine research and development.

Vaccines

The WHO Global Influenza Surveillance Network, consisting of 4 collaborating centres and 112 institutions spread across 83 countries, compiles information for influenza vaccine formulation based on the analysis of viral isolates collected in participating countries. It also serves as a mechanism for alerting countries to the emergence of strains with unusual pathogenicity or pandemic potential. For this network to serve its purpose, however, virus samples must be supplied in a timely fashion. With regard to H5N1, factors which have to date hampered exchanges between countries and researchers include safety and security considerations, inadequate

infrastructure, intellectual property concerns and, most significantly, lack of political will (Webster and Hulse [2005](#): 415). In January 2007, Indonesia started withholding samples of H5N1 virus from WHO, claiming that the agency was transferring viral samples to pharmaceutical companies to make influenza vaccines for which the Indonesian people would have to pay an unacceptably high price. In an attempt to secure an affordable vaccine supply in the event of an influenza pandemic, Indonesia subsequently commenced negotiations to sell H5N1 virus samples exclusively to the US company Baxter International (Aglionby and Jack [2007](#)). This move highlighted the fear among poorer countries that they may be unable to benefit from new vaccines and drugs that result from their cooperation with international influenza researchers. Although WHO shared Indonesia's concerns, it reportedly described the country's actions as a 'threat to global health security' (Enserink [2007](#)).

At a meeting with WHO officials in March 2007, the Indonesian health minister sought assurances that her country would get a vaccine if a pandemic occurred, reportedly calling the current vaccine supply scheme 'more dangerous than the threat of an H5N1 pandemic itself' (Normile [2007b](#): 37). Indonesia subsequently agreed to resume supplying WHO with virus samples, subject to the agency seeking Indonesia's authorisation before sharing these with other researchers. In formal recognition of the concern represented by Indonesia's drastic action, the WHO member states at the 60th World Health Assembly (14–23 May 2007) passed a resolution requesting that WHO 'establish an international stockpile of vaccines for H5N1 or other influenza viruses of pandemic potential, and to formulate mechanisms and guidelines aimed at ensuring fair and equitable distribution of pandemic influenza vaccines at affordable prices in the event of a pandemic' (WHO Online [2007](#)).

Despite this expression of international solidarity, the practicalities of producing and distributing vaccine are primarily a function of pharmaceutical companies rather than states. Even where there is political support for international cooperation, the task of global vaccination still requires that formidable technical and economic obstacles be surmounted. Only once the pandemic influenza virus has started to spread could the process of developing a strain-specific vaccine begin. Thereafter, the number of lives saved would depend largely upon how quickly and on what scale vaccine manufacturing could be initiated. The global manufacturing capacity of

trivalent (directed against three virus strains) seasonal influenza vaccine is 300 million doses every six months. Assuming a single dose of pandemic vaccine is sufficient to bestow immunity (and it may not be), global capacity would therefore be 900 million doses (Stephenson [2006](#): 965). However, at least 3 to 4 billion people worldwide will require vaccination in the event of a pandemic (Fedson and Dunnill [2007](#): 330). One possible means of meeting the demand is the use of 'adjuvants', substances which enable the dilution of a vaccine with no loss of effect. However, preliminary experiments with adjuvants and H5N1 vaccines have so far not provided cause for optimism (Brown [2006](#)).

In addition to technical hurdles, there is an important commercial dimension to be considered. The global vaccine market is worth around US\$6.5 billion annually, or the equivalent of 2 per cent of the pharmaceutical market generally (Roberts and Lu [2004](#): 395). Pharmaceutical companies hesitate to invest in this area because of uncertainty over a viable market, and governments do not go where the market fears to tread because widespread availability of pandemic vaccines is generally not considered a public good. There is little that can be done in the short term to remedy this situation except to build extra production capacity as quickly as possible. However, for this to be commercially worthwhile, there needs to be a long-term increase in consumer demand for vaccines against regular influenza from one year to the next. In essence, a healthy influenza vaccine market would be one constantly primed for a pandemic emergency. To this end, a reasonable policy would be for national governments to increase incentives for their citizens to undergo annual vaccination.

Another suggestion for speeding up global pandemic influenza vaccination (and thus saving more lives) is regulatory harmonisation between the world's three biggest producers of seasonal influenza vaccine: the US, European Union and Japan. In all likelihood, pandemic vaccines developed in different parts of the world will not be the same; there may be differences, for example, in dosage, formulation, route of administration and additives. These differences can in turn affect the licensing of pandemic vaccines (Gronvall and Borio [2006](#): 171). The problem for pharmaceutical companies is that, as every country has specific licensing requirements, vaccine manufacturers must tailor their product to each country's regulatory framework. This, Gigi Gronvall and Luciana Borio ([2006](#): 169) observe, 'wastes time that could be spent producing vaccine, it limits the entry of manufacturers into the global

market, and it limits the ability to produce vaccine for the global population'. If regulatory processes were harmonised, they argue, 'manufacturers could produce one pandemic vaccine for multiple markets'.

The integral role that pharmaceutical companies would play in response to a pandemic is a reflection of how the pursuit of global health and security extends beyond the responsibilities of states and international institutions. For countries in East Asia which fear the consequences of missing out on pandemic influenza vaccines, a regional–global nexus needs to be maintained that would encompass the interests of corporations as well. Indonesia's negotiations with Baxter International in early 2007 over H5N1 samples were indicative of genuine concerns in East Asia that such a nexus would break under the strain of a pandemic.

Conclusion

Pandemic influenza would be a health crisis so serious as to constitute a threat to global security. If the H5N1 avian influenza virus mutates into a form transmissible between humans, the result would likely be wide-scale illness and death, severe economic disruption and the undermining of societal functioning. In response to this challenge, in East Asia and around the world, it is in the interests of states and the people within them that a regional–global nexus be maintained. As the most likely epicentre of an influenza pandemic, East Asia urgently requires international assistance in the form of reducing opportunities for human H5N1 infection, enhancing local disease surveillance networks and strengthening national capabilities for patient care. The security imperative for such action is shared vulnerability in a highly connected world; in circumstances where a respiratory disease was transmitted easily between people, transmission between countries would be facilitated by international air travel. Thus far, international material assistance has generally not been commensurate with the grave rhetoric in official utterances on the pandemic threat, and most national health systems in East Asia remain dangerously weak. Compounding this problem, a relatively poor commitment to regionalising health could undermine the transnational coordination of response activities in the event of a pandemic.

Just as a regional–global nexus requires the rest of the world looking to East Asia to prevent or delay a pandemic, so too East Asia is looking to the rest of the world to share pharmaceutical defences once a pandemic has

commenced. At present, global vaccine manufacturing capacity is woefully inadequate and countries are compelled to negotiate bilaterally with manufacturers to acquire supplies. There is a danger that poorer countries in East Asia might feel less inclined to cooperate with WHO and pharmaceutical companies on pandemic influenza vaccine research if they lack confidence that the fruits of such research will be globally available. To achieve the required expansion in world manufacturing capacity, national and international efforts need to be directed towards enhancing commercial incentives to make vaccine. In the face of a pandemic threat of East Asian origins and with worldwide health and security consequences, pharmaceutical companies are an integral part of the global response.

Part IV

16 The new transregional security politics of the Asia-Pacific

Amitav Acharya

Introduction

A core aim of this volume, as stated by William Tow in [chapter 1](#), is to study ‘how Asian security politics will affect international security or will, in turn, be influenced by global events and structures’. International relations theories, including theoretical perspectives on regional order, are only partially helpful in addressing this question. The existing literature on the nexus pays far more attention to how global forces shape regional orders, than to examining the other side of the coin, how regions determine global order, a question that ought to figure prominently in a genuinely two-way relationship.

For example, two major recent contributions to the study of regional orders (which have also been discussed in [chapters 1](#) and [2](#) of this volume), Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver's (2003) *Regions and Powers*, and Peter Katzenstein's (2005) *A World of Regions*, both claim the centrality of regions in world politics. They emphatically endorse David Lake and Patrick Morgan's earlier assertion that with the end of the Cold War, regions have become ‘substantially more important’ sites of conflict and cooperation than in the past (Lake and Morgan 1997b: 7). But a closer look at these works (both theory and empirics) shows that they pay far more attention to how systemic forces, especially global power configurations, affect regional security, than to how regional actors and processes, especially outside Europe, shape global security politics and economics. Despite their valuable contribution in identifying the regional dimension of global order and offering helpful categories and concepts to study regional power structures and interactions, they fall short of demonstrating any significant measure of autonomy and feedback effect that might be expected in a more regionalised world, or a ‘world of regions’.

For example, the notion of ‘overlay’ in security complex theory holds that decolonisation and the end of the Cold War allowed the regional level of security in the Third World to come into its own. But the extent of regional autonomy implied in this formulation is limited by the structural realist framing of the theory, which has little to say about how the distribution of

power and interactive patterns within individual security complexes determine the overall security of the global system. Are 'centred' security complexes more conducive to international stability than 'standard' types? In a similar vein, the notion of 'porous' regions in Katzenstein's more institutionalist framework captures key transnational forces at work in shaping regional orders. Regions are made porous by the twin forces of globalisation and regionalisation, both of which ultimately follow the power and purpose of the American imperium. But the idea of porosity, like that of overlay, fails to fully account for the relative autonomy of regions that it recognises from the very outset. Although Katzenstein refers to 'two-way Americanisation', what is left uncertain is how regions shape global political and economy dynamics through a relationship of resistance and feedback (Acharya [2007](#)).

Locating the global–regional nexus in Asian security

Against this backdrop, the essays in this volume go a long way in addressing the one-sided conceptualisation of the global–regional security nexus that characterises the available literature on regional orders. In this concluding essay, I draw upon the various chapters to argue that understanding the global–regional nexus is not just a matter of sorting out the level of analysis problem, i.e., identifying which issues and actors belong in and operate at which level of analysis. Nor is it merely a question of establishing the relative autonomy of regions, i.e., how regional dynamics emerge and operate without significant penetration from outside or global forces. It is also a matter of exploring how the regional level shapes the global, or what might be termed the 'local construction of global order' including the relationship of resistance and feedback that regional actors and processes offer to the global security structures and actors. The overall relationship is one of mutual constitution between the regional and global dynamics. In the sections below, I identify five key areas that define this nexus, areas that do not simply show how global forces shape regional order, but also how regional dynamics shapes global order. These are:

1. Asia as a site of great power interactions with the potential for affecting the distribution of power in the global system.
2. Asia's place and role in shaping post-Cold War

regional institutional structures and dynamics, and the extent to which these can mitigate the competition (global as well as regional) among the rising powers of the twenty-first century.

3. Asia's response to new organising principles of global order, including democratic peace, cooperative security and human security.

4. Asia as a source of increasing global interdependence, and as a test case of the liberal proposition that economic interdependence is a force for peace.

5. Asia as a transmission belt for transnational security threats, such as global warming, pandemics, drug trafficking, piracy and terrorism, and so on.

All five of these components are developed in various ways by the preceding chapters in this book. The intent here is to synthesise them into a sufficiently coherent explanation of what 'nexus' is and to prompt further theoretical research and policy analysis of how the concept might be better incorporated into future studies of overall Asian security politics.

Power

The first of these linkages is power. With so many of the emergent Asian regional powers claiming recognition, with increasing justification, as global-level players, Asian security politics will be a key element of the global distribution of power. Great powers from outside Asia already find it increasingly difficult to place Asia after Europe and the Middle East in the 'ranking' of regions in their grand strategies. This used to be the case with the US during much of the Cold War period. Contestable as it was then, it is even more so now. And globalist strategic frameworks that treat Asia just as another region would no longer work. Michael Mastanduno's ([chapter 4](#)) analysis of the US role in Asia in this volume shows that while global security interdependence has grown, in the sense that developments in one region affect others, the framework of a single 'global' US strategy for different regions – Asia, Europe and the Middle East – is increasingly obsolescent.

There was a time when European regional politics, such as the Concert system which took shape in 1814, was synonymous with global ordering.

Twenty-first century Asia could well come close to being in a similar position. This is not just a matter, as Evelyn Goh's contribution in this volume argues, of recognising the US as an Asian power, rather than an extra-regional one, but also looking at the rise of China, Japan and India as both systemic-level economic and military players of the global security order in the twenty-first century. Hence, global and regional dynamics are now becoming intertwined to an extent not seen since the advent of European colonialism destroyed Asia's pre-eminent role in the world economy and power structure.

Asia's growing salience in the global distribution of power could produce different outcomes, ranging from hegemony to cooperative balancing. Some neo-realists, especially John Mearsheimer ([2001](#): 41), argue that hegemony or attempted hegemony of rising powers starts and probably remains primarily confined to the regional level. If this applies to China, then we need to look beyond American global hegemony as the basis of Asian regional security hierarchy. In twenty-first century Asia, an Asian regional hierarchy underpinned by China could become the basis of a new global hegemony. If one disagrees with the neo-realist formulation, it is still possible to argue that unlike in the past, when American powers acted as the main bridge between global and regional (Asian) levels of security ordering, Asia in the twenty-first century will see the opposite trend. While America's global power, even at its post-hegemonic state, will continue to shape regional order, Chinese along with Japanese and Indian power will work in a reverse direction, by shaping global order from a regional vantage point.

But hegemony is not the only, or even the most likely outcome of Asia's growing salience in the global distribution of power. Asia will also define the prospect for great cooperation in the twenty-first century international system. Hugh White and Brendan Taylor ([chapter 5](#)) argue that future regional and international stability would depend on a Sino-US 'condominium', in which these two regional heavyweights agree to share power in Asia. Other possibilities for a cooperative outcome might include the aforementioned Concert-like system, involving the region's other great powers, such as India, Japan and Russia, which could be managed through institutional mechanisms created and maintained by the great powers.

Institutions

This leads us to the second aspect of the global–regional security nexus: the

role of Asia's regional institutions in shaping post-Cold War global security order. Here, the key traditional question has been whether and to what extent Asian institutions are distinctive enough (relative to their West European counterparts) to merit special consideration and thereby serve as a model for other regions of the non-Western world. But this volume opens up new ways of looking at the manner in which Asian regional institutions can shape, and be shaped by, global security dynamics. The most important question raised and discussed perceptively by Michael Wesley ([chapter 3](#)) in this volume is: can Asian institutions manage and constrain global power rivalries?

Global powers may affect regional institutions in two main ways. First, they can inhibit regional multilateral institutions, showing instead a preference for bilateralism. Or they could assert their influence through regional institutions. In Asia, the former has been the preferred mode of the US, the dominant global power, in pursuing its security interests in Asia since the Second World War. The US preference for bilateralism, known as the San Francisco system, has in turn impeded the development of multilateralism in Asia. Even the late development of multilateralism remains stunted due to (among other factors) American reluctance to fully engage these institutions.

There has been occasional US interest in the second approach, i.e., asserting its regional influence and pursuing its interest through regional institutions. In the security sphere, the main example would be SEATO (Southeast Asia Treaty Organization), but its anaemic and short life-span attests to difficulties, political and ideological, that the US faced in making multilateralism a vehicle for its Asia-Pacific strategy. In the economic sphere, the brief but significant interest shown by the US in making the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) an instrument of its global trade liberalisation agenda in 1993–4, offers a similar lesson. Efforts by other great powers or regional powers such as Japan (Greater East Asia) and India (Asian relations circa 1947, and Bandung 1955), to develop regional influence through multilateral institutions have fared little better. In short, multilateral institutions have not been particularly useful as instruments of great power (global-level powers) or regional power policies in Asia. Instead, regional institutions in Asia have been far more useful in the hands of the region's weaker states (such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, ASEAN) in acquiring a measure of voice and influence in the global councils.

Will this change? Wesley discusses the possibility of 'great power

manoeuvring within some regional institutions' that reflects an attempt by them 'either to build or reduce others' spheres of influence'. Such manoeuvring is more likely if, as noted earlier, Asia develops a Concert-like institution which is dominated by a handful of great powers (in contrast to the current pattern in Asia whose institutions are 'led' by its weaker and smaller nations like the ASEAN members). But it is too early to determine whether such efforts would succeed in overcoming Asia's long-standing aversion to great power-led regional multilateral structures. As the experience of the East Asia Summit shows, where Australia, India and New Zealand were given a seat at the table over Chinese reluctance, Asia's multilateral norm of inclusiveness might thwart tendencies towards competitive and sphere of influence regionalism.

In addition, regionalist concepts can act as sites of resistance to global-level institutions, a fact reflected in the failed and fledgling East Asian constructs and institutions, such as the East Asia Economic Group, ASEAN+3 (ASEAN plus China, Japan and South Korea) and East Asia Summit, which were, as Wesley correctly observes, born out of 'a strong narrative of grievance against Western countries and Western-dominated institutions' that followed the 1997 crisis. The rising prominence of these institutions, which reflect aspirations for regional autonomy, and which to some degree seek to displace more inclusive institutions like the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and APEC, suggests that identity and autonomy are key drivers of Asian regionalism; even if regional institutions in Asia do not serve as the model or basis for global multilateralism, they have a capacity to inhibit the regional propagation and influence of global institutions or institutions created, maintained and dominated by Western global powers.

Indeed, the observations of both Wesley and Tow (in their respective chapters) suggest that the role of regional multilateral institutions in mediating the global and regional levels of security politics works in both directions. While global powers, the US and now China, theoretically retain an ability to play out their systemic rivalry through Asian regional institutions, and hence turning the latter into little more than what Michael Leifer ([1996](#)) describes as 'adjuncts' to balance of power geopolitics, regional institutions in Asia also affect global security politics by giving Asia's weaker states a greater voice in the world councils than what they might otherwise muster through individual efforts. This may fall short of the scenarios wherein Asian institutions actually moderate global great power

rivalry, although they certainly have a chance to do so, given that institutions such as the ARF and ASEAN count as their members of interlocutors *all of the great powers in the contemporary international system*. Indeed, exerting a moderating impact on the competitive balancing behaviour of the great powers in Asia is one of the foremost objectives of Asian regional institutions, and to some extent they have already fulfilled this role, at least counter-factually, i.e., without cooperative security institutions, one might have seen a US containment policy towards China, prompting more nationalist Chinese policies that would have made the China threat a ‘self-fulfilling prophecy’.

Ideas and norms

This brings us to the third element in understanding the global–regional nexus: the role of ideas and norms in Asia's security politics. Global–regional interactions are not just materially derived, but are also ideational. Unfortunately, social constructivist explanations have had little to say about the mutual constitution (for examples of norms) between global and local ideas. The overwhelming trend has been to present norm diffusion as a one-directional affair, from global (Western) to the local (Asian). But as the ‘constitutive localisation’ perspective argues, local ideas do matter, and local beliefs and practices often are crucial mediums through which global ideas and norms are perceived and accepted (Acharya [2004](#), [2008](#)).

The design and practice of the Asian security order has certainly been influenced by global security ideas and norms: including multilateralism, common security, humanitarian intervention and human security. But Asia is often seen (and criticised) as a site of resistance rather than facilitation of principled ideas advanced by the West, including human security and humanitarian intervention (‘responsibility to protect’). This perception is not without basis, given that many new norms of global governance challenge traditional dominance of state sovereignty, on which Asia among all non-Western regions has been especially reluctant to compromise (Moon and Chun [2003](#)). But this critique cannot be pushed too far. Asia has also been at the forefront of normative innovation, as exemplified by the idea of human security, which, at least in its ‘freedom from want’ (human development) formulation, can be said to be Asian in origin, constituting an example of how an idea conceived by Asian proponents has acquired global prominence and begun to affect global security thinking, if not security politics outright.

Moreover, Asia's role in the global transmission of ideas and norms cannot be said to have been a one-way process. Instead of viewing Asian local actors as passive recipients, there is a good case to be made for conceptualising their role as active borrowers and localisers. The development of cooperative security institutions in Asia after the end of the Cold War was not a case of simple adoption of the European common security idea. Rather, the idea was localised by Asia-Pacific states, including Australia, Canada and ASEAN members, with inter-governmental and second track levels playing a key role. Cooperative security is one example of the crucial role that local actors and beliefs play in the transmission and spread of global ideas.

The chapter by Akiko Fukushima and Tow ([chapter 9](#)) also shows that after initial hesitance, Asian states have become more receptive to the notion of human security. What is noteworthy is that Asia's receptivity to human security was partly due to its own experience with transnational threats, such as SARS and the Indian Ocean tsunami. This suggests that ideas that seem alien (rightly or wrongly and certainly wrongly in the case of human security) at the outset could become more amenable to local adoption if they resonate with the interests and needs of local actors.

Interdependence

A fourth aspect of the linkage between global and regional security politics concerns the role of Asia as a source of increasing global interdependence, and as a test case of the controversial liberal proposition that economic interdependence is a force for peace. The debate over the pacific effects of economic interdependence has been heavily influenced by late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century European experience. Critics of the liberal argument argue that interdependence failed, or might even have contributed to, the outbreak of the First and Second World Wars. To these critics, economic interdependence is irrelevant to peace and security at best, or a catalyst of conflict at worst (Buzan and Segal [1994](#)).

Yet, economic interdependence in twenty-first century Asia is different in nature and scope than the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century European pattern. As Brian Pollins points out, contemporary economic interdependence differs from the European pattern of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in three key respects: 'the transnational reorganisation of production, the content of trade flows and the dispersion of global capital centres' (IDSS [2006](#): 3). Economic interdependence in Asia today is driven by transnational

production, a relationship that is far costlier to break than simply intra-regional trade. Moreover, as Dale Copeland ([1996](#), [2003](#)) argues in his reformulation of interdependence theory, it is not the level of trade *per se*, the expectations of future trade, that is the critical factor in deciding the link between interdependence and war. Asian economic interdependence is being managed through global multilateral rules, including the World Trade Organization, which, despite periodic crises and setbacks, continues to provide usable mechanisms for settling trade disputes that were not available to late nineteenth-century trading partners. John Ravenhill's ([chapter 10](#)) assessment in this volume of the Asia-Pacific economic security nexus refers to the 'markedly different institutional context' of twenty-first-century interdependence, whereby global economic institutions are joined 'minilateral arrangements that facilitate confidence-building among states'.

Transnational perils

A fifth area of linkage between global and regional security politics concerns the role of Asia as a source and/or a transmission belt for global transnational security threats. The present volume is especially rich in case studies that explore these linkages, ranging from nuclear proliferation, global warming, pandemics, drug trafficking, piracy, terrorism and energy insecurity.

As these chapters show, the line between transnational and transregional threats is thin indeed. They provide many examples where Asian 'regional' problems remain at the heart of the global spread of these threats, as exemplified in the US policy-makers' dubbing of Southeast Asia as global terrorism's 'second front' (supplementing the Middle East and Central Asia as a source of radical Islamist *jihad*), North Korea's centrality in global proliferation concerns after it became the latest nation to join the nuclear club, and Asia as the 'cradle of [global] pandemic influenza' (to quote the alarming subtitle of Christian Enemark's essay in this volume). Asia is also the hub of the so-called second Nuclear Age. In contrast to the first Nuclear Age, efforts to acquire nuclear weapons now are driven as much by regime security concerns (North Korea and Iran) as by the traditional notion of national survival and security. More important, whereas the first age was transatlantic and European (only one of the five original nuclear weapons states was Asian), all three of the subsequent additions to the nuclear club (excluding Israel, an undeclared nuclear power) have been from Asia. As a result, Asian nuclear powers are far more proximate to each other, hence

capable of causing as much damage to their rivals despite their relatively smaller arsenals as the larger Soviet and American nuclear force capabilities during the Cold War. This is yet another distinctive feature of the second Nuclear Age. Moreover, these Asian proliferation cases, despite differences among them, have the potential for seriously altering global security order: by altering the global nuclear balance (if India acquires a substantial nuclear arsenal), by sparking a strategic missile defence competition between India and China, by breaking the 'nuclear taboo' (if nuclear weapons are used in a future India–Pakistan conflict) and by undermining the global proliferation regime through their demonstration effect (see [chapter 12](#)).

More piracy incidents happen in Asian waters than anywhere else in the world, and as Sam Bateman ([chapter 13](#)) points out, Asia's sea lanes are arguably the Achilles heel of global commerce. In energy as well as environment, Asia is at the centre of the global problem and the solution to it. The spectacular economic growth of China and India not only fuels the shortage of energy resources, but also becomes a potent aggravating factor in global climate change. Hence, regional dynamics in these areas heavily influence the global extent of the most pressing transnational threats of our time and the possible solutions to them.

Regions are not just a source or transmission belt of the transnational dangers, but also part of the solution to them. As Aynsley Kellow ([chapter 14](#)) argues in analysing the problems of energy and environmental security in the Asia-Pacific, while regional solutions are not always adequate and excessive reliance on them might be counter-productive, they have often proved to be more appropriate and effective in addressing these issues than exclusive reliance on global norms and approaches.

In a related vein, while many contemporary threats are transnational and transregional, this does not mean their analysis and understanding is best done through simplifying globalist narratives. Greg Fealy and Carlyle Thayer ([chapter 11](#)) offer a powerful critique of terrorism specialists who lack understanding of local conditions and end up exaggerating the external linkages behind, and hence the overall extent of, the threat, thereby contributing to the 'age of total fear' (see [chapter 9](#)) that has marked much of Asian security concerns about terrorism since 11 September. While terrorism is a global challenge, the roots of terror in Asia, as in other parts of the world, have deep and lasting local roots. The same can apply to the analysis of piracy, whose cultural and historical roots are often ignored in the post-11

September discourses about global and regional maritime security. The foregoing observation conforms to Bateman's reminder that many Asian 'regional maritime security concerns are quite distinctive and autonomous'. Similarly, the motivations behind Iran's quest for nuclear weapons requires an adequate understanding of its immediate or local security context, given, as Hanson and Rajagopalan point out, that any Iranian nuclear weapons capability 'is likely to be a response to specific local threat assessments rather than the consequence of any demonstration effect of South Asian nuclear programmes'. The study of transnational perils in Asia cannot ignore the critical need for local and contextual knowledge. In short, area studies knowledge retains an important place and relevance in analysing the emerging transnational security politics of the Asia-Pacific.

Asian foundations of global order

Although this volume has identified a significant and growing nexus between Asian security and global order, it is unlikely that Asia will simply 'learn', embrace or adjust to the principles and practices of 'global ordering' as defined and established during the long era of Western dominance. Rather, Asia's engagement with, and contribution to, the existing global security (as well as economic) order is best described as one of *contingent globalism*. Asian actors, both states and peoples, are acutely aware of the impact of global forces on regional security, be it American military presence, in its global and Asian dimensions, the global economy which sustains regional interdependence, or normative forces such as the ideas of security community and human security to which Asians are increasingly exposed and even sympathetic. For the most part, they see no necessary contradiction between global dynamics and the requirements of regional order. But tensions do exist in some important areas, and here, Asians have been reluctant and incomplete globalists. This reluctance is evident in the rejection or partial acceptance by several Asian governments of ideas of democracy and human rights, free trade, and cooperative and human security. They have consciously sought to balance exposure to and interaction with global actors and processes with an aspiration for regional identity and autonomy. One example in the institutional arena would be the tension between APEC and East Asian regional frameworks (Higgott and Stubbs [1995](#)). Another example would be their greater willingness to accept human security in its 'freedom from want'

dimension as opposed to its ‘freedom from fear’ dimension (Evans [2004](#)). Yet another can be found in Asia's security multilateralism, where the notion of cooperative security goes hand in hand with the persisting sanctity of non-intervention.

Drawing upon the chapters in this volume, this concluding chapter has identified five pathways in which Asia will shape the twenty-first-century global order. But these pathways are framed in conceptual terms that come straight out of the prevailing conceptual inventory of international relations theories, theories which are dominated by Western ideas and historical experiences. There are other, regionally indigenous approaches to security and order that will also be evident and hence must be taken into account in Asia's transnational and transregional security politics in the twenty-first century (Acharya and Buzan [2007](#)).

Already, as several chapters in this volume make clear, Asia challenges many of the dominant concepts and theoretical approaches to understanding and analysing global order that are derived from Western ideas and experiences. Tow's remark in [chapter 1](#): ‘None of the major and contending approaches in international relations theory – realism, liberal-institutionalism or constructivism – is sufficient to effectively embrace this range of transnational security dilemmas’ in Asia today, resonates through the chapters. Consider the example of liberal theory which is put to the most serious scrutiny among all the international relations theories in this volume. William Case ([chapter 7](#)) challenges a core assumption of liberalism: democratic peace theory in the Asian context. For him, the Asian experience tells us that ‘democratic procedures and institutions may no better encourage restraint and moderation on security issues than does authoritarian rule’. Sorpong Peou ([chapter 8](#)) raises the possibility of an Asia-Pacific ‘security community’, but laments that this is unlikely to come about under present conditions because of the absence in Asia of at least two conditions: ‘democratic norms shared by regional states and the expansion of democratic leadership throughout the region’. Ravenhill's essay supports the pacific effects of the second pillar of liberalism, interdependence in the Asian context (although it rejects realist attempts to apply blatantly Eurocentric arguments against the liberal argument), but Wesley is ambivalent about the role of the third pillar, international institutions, in promoting international order, defined in his case as their ability to manage great power competition in Asia.

Given the diversity of beliefs and positions within a single paradigm, what emerges clearly is that no single theoretical paradigm suffices in explaining the complexities of Asia's transnational and transregional security politics; and the case for 'analytic eclecticism' is strong not just inter-paradigmatically, but also in the intra-paradigmatic sense. While mono-causal parsimonious explanations of Asia's security politics were suspect even in the more simplified geopolitical era of the Cold War, they are even more so in the new era of an increasing Asian-influenced global security politics. Moreover, apart from being one of the hotbeds of contestations in international relations theory, there is the need for infusing international relations theory with non-Western ideas and experiences, including those from Asia.

This leads to a final theoretical point: with the exception of Europe and the North Atlantic, international relations scholars have seldom recognised the regional foundations of international order-building. A good deal of previous analysis of Asian security underscored the primacy of the global causative forces, a trend reinforced earlier by the Cold War and now by the increasingly fashionable globalisation scholarship. But as this volume shows, many of today's global transnational challenges have regional origins. Although this observation can apply to other regions of the world, the presence of several contemporary or would-be global level economic and security players gives Asia an especially strong claim to act as a mover and shaper of twenty-first-century international order. The twentieth-century security politics of Asia was shaped largely by global forces originating from outside the region, such as colonialism and the Cold War. It may be too presumptuous to say that the twenty-first century may well turn out to be one in which Asia shapes global security politics. But as Tow puts it, 'the extent to which the Asian states' sense of *contingent globalism* can be eventually supplanted by a more ecumenical approach to linking region-centric priorities with key international security issues of the day will be the ultimate determinant of how powerful the Asian regional/global nexus proves to be in the larger arena of international security affairs' (correspondence with Tow, 26 January 2008).

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